

THE DIAL



JANUARY 1927

THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF PHILOSOPHY

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Translated From the Italian by Raffaello Piccoli

I BELIEVE that if not all, at least many students of philosophy will be ready to acknowledge as an actual fact, that there are two conceptions which have become superannuated and almost foreign to the spirit of modern thought, two words which have lost all authority, which indeed lend themselves either to suspicion or to derision: the conception of metaphysics, that is, of the research of a reality which should be above and beyond experience; and the conception of a systematic or final philosophy, that is, of the construction of a closed system, which should once for all constrict reality, or the supreme reality, within its bounds.

It is a double negation which, if we look carefully into it, reveals itself as the double aspect of a single one—the negation of a transcendent world, and, through it, of the conception of philosophy as theology. It is only in so far as we presume to know a transcendent world that we may look for a closed and final system, for truth as an immovable entity in opposition to the historical knowledge of passing facts, and of a world which is constantly either passing or becoming.

It is true that there are minds which are not yet resigned to this disaffection, to this divorce of modern thought from metaphysics and the closed systems; but I believe it to rest on solid foundations. It is well known that the conception of metaphysics and of the

NOTE: Printed by permission of the Sixth International Congress of Philosophy, Cambridge, Massachusetts, September, 1926.

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closed system had its origin in antiquity and reached its climax in mediaeval scholasticism; that every philosophical movement in the modern age, from the Renaissance with its appreciation of Humanism, to the rationalistic and empirical schools of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from the ideological systems, with their historical leanings, to Positivism and its naturalistic tendencies, was in one way or other a reaction against it; and finally that Bruno and Vico, Locke and Hume, Descartes and Kant, Hegel and Comte, though among many wavering and survivals and partial returns, all worked for the general erosion of transcendence. And the physiognomy of modern society, so different from the mediaeval world and so unascetic, directly confronts us. And finally, the concept of tolerance, which modern history has reached through the wars of religion, what does it import, but that truth in a static form has loosened its profound grasp of conscience, since tolerance is made possible only by indifference, or at least by the fact that theology has been confined to a place of minor importance? For a counterproof it is enough to recall that in its Syllabus, the Catholic Church, with its inflexible logic, condemns both modern philosophy and modern life.

If philosophy does not give us either a knowledge of the transcendent, or the final truth, it is clear that it cannot be anything but experience, as immanent as experience is, and, like experience, subject to perpetual growth and change. From these premises it has been hastily inferred that philosophy has ceased to accomplish any legitimate function, and the bankruptcy of philosophy has become something of a catchword, history and science being regarded as the modern substitutes for philosophy. But the truth of the matter is that the one which is bankrupt, or on the way to bankruptcy, is only transcendent, theological philosophy, and that by ridding itself of all theological implications, philosophy has but asserted its nature more energetically than ever before, and in greater conformity with our times.

The nature of philosophy consists in an enquiry concerning the categories of experience, the ideas or "values," as it is the fashion to call them, or, in other words, the Spirit in its forms and in the distinction and unity of its forms. For this part also it would be possible to prove, by an historical demonstration, that genuine philosophy has never been anything but this, even in antiquity,

even in the Middle Ages, not to speak of modern times which have produced the *Discours de la Méthode*, the *Scienza Nuova*, the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, and Hegel's Logic. It would be possible to prove that the theological, transcendent conception, when it did not constitute the negative element against which philosophy fought and developed its strength, was a mere husk, with which, more or less unconsciously, it protected itself while opening new paths; and that all the acquisitions made by philosophy are recognizable as successive increments of our knowledge of the way in which the Spirit works to produce art and science and practical and moral actions. But I shall leave aside the testimonials which could be drawn from the history of philosophy.

It may be useful, however, to point out that this conception of philosophy does not in the least re-establish transcendence and static truth in a new form, by pretending to give a final system of the eternal ideas, or categories, or "values," by which experience is governed. And indeed, if such were its task, philosophy might save itself the labour; since, when philosophy is presented in this way, there is nothing to do but to grant that the conclusions which philosophy reaches laboriously and abstrusely are the same which good sense or common sense already possesses without any philosophy, the categories which our common speech designates by the words true, good, beautiful, et cetera, and with which we deal as with intimately known and transparent objects, being actually present in our every act and word. Categories are in fact categories because they are that which *semper ubique et ab omnibus* is recognized as real and effective.

This is the reason why I did not say that philosophy discovers and determines categories, but only that its enquiries concern the categories, that is, formulate and solve the ever new problems which are continually placed before our spirit by the development of life and by the necessity of observing and judging facts which are ever new, according to that saying of the poet, that we must constantly earn anew that which we already possess. A mind with a love for rather material comparisons and images, might represent the categories as instruments with which we give form to matter and which are deteriorated by use, or show themselves inadequate to the task; and philosophy as the technique which repairs them and makes them efficient once more. And, stretching the comparison,

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one might add that just as instruments are not instruments, are not real instruments, except in the work for which they are made and in which they wear themselves out, philosophy is not real and concrete except through experience and in experience or, to use a larger term, in history. And this addition to our comparison leads us naturally to a consideration of the unity of philosophy and historical construction, of philosophy and historiography.

I hope that, after this explanation, my definition of philosophy, as the abstract moment of historiography, or the methodology of historiography, will not appear a paradox. The knowledge that interests us truly, and which is the only kind that is of any interest to us, is that of the particular and individual things among which we live, and which we can transform and produce incessantly, since we are not immersed in reality as in an external medium, but are one thing with reality; those particular and individual things which *are* the universe. It may sometimes appear that we can do without philosophy, or methodology; and to a certain extent this is true, so long as our judgement finds the road clear before itself, or not too crowded with obstacles, so long as the definitions implicit in its terms are vivid with light. But as soon as our judgement, through the complexity of facts, or through the passions by which it is troubled, becomes embarrassed and arrested, and seems to lose its criterion, doubt is born, and, with doubt, the necessity for new distinctions and new definitions, that is, the necessity to philosophize. It is only by philosophy that historical thought and judgement can be started again on their course. New facts require a new philosophy; but, as the old facts live in the new ones, philosophy is at the same time transient and eternal; never static, however, never vanishing in the direction of phenomenism, philosophy has its existence not as a closed and final system, but as a perpetual chain of systematizations.

The dignity which this conception of philosophy lends to history imports an opposition, but an opposition only to metaphysics and transcendence. It is strange, be it said in passing, that this opposition should have been often misunderstood, as an opposition to physical science. The main cause of such misunderstanding is to be looked for perhaps in the persistent dualism, in which so many of us are still entangled, of history and nature, mythologically

posed as two metaphysical entities, while they are but two gnoseologically different modes of mental elaboration of the same reality. The one is a purely theoretical mode, the other a theoretical and practical one. But if in science we leave aside all that is mere auxiliary abstraction, and didascalic schematism, we see that science as well as history investigates and thinks out and knows particular and individual facts in their becoming. Science therefore is history, and not even, rigorously speaking, a history of nature as against a history of man, but a living and spiritual history of the same kind as human history. Human history, on the other hand, by the use of abstractions, can also be lowered, and has been lowered, to nature and to abstract natural history. The historical concepts of evolution, or of creative evolution, of struggle for life, of the survival of the fittest, and such like, which have become part of the sciences of nature, and the consciousness which the theorists of physical science have reached of the abstract and conventional elements and of the exigencies of mental economy which inform scientific thought, tend to show in the clearest fashion that the content of the physical sciences is an historical content. Similarly, the development of historical thought tends to draw a sharper and sharper distinction between true history and historical abstraction or schematism, between historiography and sociology.

An analogous answer must be given to another objection, that such a philosophy as we have tried to outline is contrary or at least foreign to religion, and that it is devoid of the sense of mystery. Without doubt philosophy is opposed to the transcendent and consequently mythological conception of religion; but since the essence of religious feeling has never been anything but a confident effort towards purification and elevation, a striving through sorrow and joy towards truth and goodness, this modern and human philosophy admits within itself any earnest and sincere religion which there could be in the world. And since it looks upon reality not as a fact but as a continuous doing, a perpetual creation, it does not impose any limit to new forms either of life or of thought. The sacred mystery is after all but this infinite creative power, this divine life of the universe. It may be said that this does not satisfy us entirely, and that there is in the heart of man an inextinguishable desire to overcome the conditions of life itself, and to escape from

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the barriers of thought, and a hope and presentiment of another reality which is not the reality that we produce in our life and in our thought. Thought, however, as such, and therefore philosophy, can well account for this desire, can discern if it truly exists, what it is, and how it arises; but it can never, even if it obeyed the strongest impulse of humility, transform it into an exigency higher than itself, nor deny, within the circle of thought and reality, thought and reality itself. A world different from our world possesses as its first characteristic this one: that it should be unknown to our world, because, if it were known, it would not be different, and the hypothesis would fall. And this seems to me to be a perfectly orthodox proposition, since transcendent religion does not appeal to thought but to revelation. Of revelation, however, there is no occasion to speak here.

It would be well to discourse, instead, of the importance which philosophy, as an enquiry into categories, ideas, and values, and as a gradually deeper and more vivid consciousness of humanity, may have for the solution of the religious crisis in which modern society is involved; a crisis which has become more severe since the time when, after the youthful audacity of the Renaissance, after the secure but somewhat facile and arid confidence of illuministic Rationalism, the Romantic era began, which still lasts, with its discordant aspirations, with its idealism and sensualism, with its dreams of beatitude, and its pessimistic despairs. We shall not come out of this crisis except through the strengthening of a new and human religious susceptibility, at least for those who, like myself, consider the restoration of the old religions or the introduction in the European world of the ancient Eastern religions, a Utopian fantasy.

If philosophy can be but the philosophy of historical experience—if metaphysics and the superhistorical systems and the innumerable problems and positing of problems which are consequent upon them, are truly dead and buried—is it possible that the type of the modern student of philosophy might still be that which developed itself in the mediaeval schools, and was later transplanted to the modern universities? The type of the “pure philosopher,” who deals with the “eternal problems,” and strives for the interpretation of the enigma of reality, and sometimes imagines that he has resolved it, and sometimes confesses his own defeat or, being a

man of good will, believes that he has brought his own contribution towards the much sighed for solution which one day somebody else shall discover, this type is clearly derived from the theologian of the mediaeval schools. The consciousness of the unity, and of the active interchange, of philosophy and experience, of methodology and history, postulates the necessity for a new type of philosophical student, who should take part in the investigations of history and of science, and in the work and life of his own times, both from a political and moral standpoint, if not always directly and actively, at least as a passionately interested observer: a student of philosophy, who, in order to be true to his vocation need not be a pure philosopher, but practise, as other men do, a profession, being himself above all (let us remember it, since there is a kind of philosopher who is willing to forget it) a man in the full sense of the word.

TREE

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

The tree is stiff, the branch
is arching, arching, arching
to the ground. Already its tip
reaches the hats of the passersby
children leap at it, hang on it—
bite on it. It is rotten, it
will be thick with blossoms in
the spring. Then it will break off
of its own weight or from the pulls
of the blossom seekers who will
ravish it. Freed of this disgrace
the tree will remain, stiffly upright

NORTH IS BLACK

OLIVER LA FARGE *2nd*

IT is true that we say that North is black, and cold, and bad because of the stories of our old men, but those are good stories. They had them from the old men before them, from the time that there were no Americans. The Navajo have been here ever since the land was made, the Americans are new.

It is no use to show me that picture of mountains in the North again. I know it is white because it is all snow. I know those mountains. I have seen them. Yes, why do you suppose they call me North Wanderer? I went there, I came back with many horses. Ask my people about the horses Nahokonss Naga brought with him. Yes, that is why I went, to steal horses. I stood on a high place, praying, and my prayers fell away from me, down into the valleys. My prayers got lost, they would not fly up to the Four Quarters. It is bad there.

Give me more coffee.

I speak with one tongue, I went to steal horses. I was always brave. When I was a boy they took me to San Carlos, where the Apaches are. They taught me to talk American. I ran away, and lived all alone until my hair grew. When my hair was long again, I had made myself a bow and arrows, moccasins, a skin blanket. I had stolen two horses. I was always like that.

It is true there are good horses nearer than there. I was three moons going, and three moons coming, but I wanted to see.

Then I will tell you the truth. I am old, it is good someone should know. But you must not tell. I know you, you will not tell; no one would believe.

You see that fire? If you try to shut it up in a box, it will burn the box. I was like that. The soldiers would not let us go on the war-path. There was no work for us. Sometimes we went down to raid the Moqui a little bit, to steal sheep, but not enough. We young men were looking for trouble.

A man with a big red beard came and made a Trading Post

near the railroad, a few miles from my mother's *hogahn*. I lived there, because I did not think of marriage; all the time I was studying to be a singer, learning about the Gods, and the Medicine. I was like the Black Robed Preachers at Chin Lee, I did not think about women.

Red Beard was not like other traders, he was the other kind of American. They don't have that kind out here, I got to know about them later. They are different. Red Beard was sick, that was why he came out here. He did not care about the trading. He was honest with us and we made money off him. He never understood us. He was a good man.

He had a lot of friends coming to see him, from the East. They, too, were different. They liked to wear little pistols. At this time, Americans only carried pistols when they thought there would be trouble, then they had big pistols, not like the ones most of Red Beard's friends carried. And Red Beard's friends never shot anything. Most of them did not know how to shoot. They had bad manners, like the people at Grand Canyon. We were not used to that then, two or three times we were going to kill them.

Their women came out with them. There was one who was tall, and straight, and had black hair, like an Indian's, and brown eyes. She pulled her hair tight, tying it behind, like a Navajo. I fell in love with her.

I was digging holes to plant corn one day, and I saw She-Rain coming up the valley, with a rainbow behind it. I thought, "That looks like that American Girl." Then I was frightened, for I knew I must be in love. How could any man think that the rainbow, that is the Way of the Gods, looked like a woman, unless his eyes were twisted with love?

The next time I was with Mountain Singer, learning Medicine, I sang the Hozogi. When I said, "I walk with beauty all around me," my mind wandered to her, I forgot about the Gods and the Holy Things. I said to Mountain Singer, "My mind is bad." He told me to fast.

When I had fasted for four days, I returned to my mother's *hogahn*. When I came in, she said, "What is the matter with you?"

I said, "Nothing."

She asked me again, "What is the matter?" Again I told her, "Nothing."

She asked me four times, and the fourth time she said, "Warrior-With-Gods, tell me what is the matter with you?"

When she called me by that name, I had to answer true. I said, "I am sick inside, I am bad inside; I must cleanse myself."

My mother said, "You will not wash out your sickness, nor pray it out. That is man's talk."

I had already fasted. Now I let down my hair, praying. I went into the sweat bath. All the time that I was there I sang. When I came out and jumped into the creek, I felt all well again. I ran, singing and leaping.

Then I saw mother-of-pearl dawn in the East, all-colour rain, and the rainbow. I heard the Four Singers on the Four Mountains. But it was midday, and clear, and the desert was silent. I had seen that American Girl come out of the post to watch me running. So I went back to my *hogahn*, and sat down, covering my face with my blanket.

My mother said, "By and by she will go away, then you will get well." My mother was a wise woman.

After that I tried to keep away from the post, but I was like a horse on a rope. She used to hire me to guide her to places. When I had been with her and she was friendly to me, I used to feel weak, so that after I went away I sat down and groaned. Sometimes, though, I would want to leap and run, because I had foolish thoughts. When the corn began to sprout I was like that all the time. She should not have been so friendly to me.

One day she said to me, "I will give you this bracelet if you will let me ride your pinto horse."

He was the best horse anybody had round there. I answered, "You do not need to pay me to ride my horse; but if you will give me the bracelet, I should like it."

Her face was strange when she gave me the bracelet. I was afraid she would laugh at me, but she did not. My heart sang. I did not understand them, those people.

She wanted to go up to the top of Blue Rock Mesa, where the shrine is, where you can see for many days' ride all around. So I took her up there. She was not like most Americans, the way

they act. They talk fast, and shout, and spit over the edge. She was quiet, and looked, and thought about it, like an Indian. Then she made me tell her the names of all the places we could see. I showed her the mountains where the Utes are, you could just see them, like a low line of smoke in the north.

She said, "To-morrow I go up there."

I told her, "It is far."

"I am going in the iron-with-fire-in-it. I am going to my brother's house, far beyond there. He lives there because there is good hunting. You can come there."

When she began, my heart was sick; when she ended, my heart was high with joy, that she should want me to follow her. I thought I would make sure. I said, "I do not know that trail."

She told me she would show me on the map when we got back to the Post. I did not know about maps, then; I thought it was strong medicine. She told me about the trail, then she told me about one of the mountains you have in that picture. You see it a week before you come to it, and it is marked so that you can tell it. She showed me a picture of it. While she was talking, her voice broke once; when she got through, her face was strange. Again I thought she was going to laugh at me, but she did not, so I read those signs, and was glad.

I did not watch her go, there was no use. I went on learning to be a singer, to make myself strong. My heart was happy, and I learned well. I traded close with Red Beard, to get money. I had Mountain Singer make me a fire drill, with turquoise and abalone-shell and mother-of-pearl and black stone on it, because it would be dark in the North, and I knew I would need it. I made more arrows, with fine points to them. A man came to the Post who had a rifle, the best I had ever seen, and lots of cartridges for it. It took me three weeks to steal that rifle. Every day, I drew the North Trail in the sand. I gave that girl a name, Nahokonss Atad—that is, in American, Northern Maiden.

A lot of time went by this way. When I was ready, I went and gambled with my money. I knew that I could not lose, my medicine was sure. I gambled with some Americans, with their cards; that was easy. Then I gambled with Indians. I won very much, so that I was rich.

At the moon of tall corn there was a squaw-dance over in Blue Canyon. I told my mother I would go there, and see if I could find a girl I liked to marry. She saw me gathering all the jewellery I had won.

"That is well, if you do not lose your way." She said, "Have you good medicine, lots of corn pollen?"

My face was ashamed when I heard that, but no one could have stopped me then.

I painted my pinto horse, so that he was an ugly dun colour, and I tied a horse-hair around his hock to make him lame. I packed my jewellery and buckskin on him, and my good blankets, and dressed myself in old American clothes, with an old blanket. I had much jewellery for her, and a silver bridle to give her with the pinto horse, I did not want it stolen. I tied turquoise to my gun to make it strong.

All that night I sang, but not at the squaw-dance; I sang to go North. At dawn I started.

It was a long trip. When I was far enough North, I took my hair down and braided it, saying I was a Pai-Ute carrying a message for some Mormons. The Pai-Utes are always poor, and they are friends of the Mormons; they let me pass. I passed beyond the Ute country, through tribes I did not know. I talked signs with them, asking for this mountain. Once I had a fight with some Indians, and two times with Americans. Those Indians scalp everyone they kill, like the Utes.

I was three moons on the trail. Then I came to where snow was. It was the end of harvest moon, too early for snow, I knew I was coming to the North. I hoped to meet some of the Frozen Navajo, who live up there, but I did not. By and by it got to be all snow and colder than it ever is here. That was not like winter snow, but deep like all-year snow that you see on the north side of Dokosli, high up. Then I saw the mountain.

I had not seen Indians for a week, it was all ranches and cattle. There was a railroad, and a big town. I made camp where there were some woods, away from the town. I had stolen a hat from a ranch I passed near, leaving a lot of fine horses, because I was afraid to make trouble. Now I wound my hair up around my head, so that the hat covered it. I took off my head-band. With

my old American clothes, I looked like a Mexican. I talk a little Mexican. So I went into town.

That town was big. It did not look as though I could ever find Northern Maiden there. And I could not ask for her, I did not know her name. All I could do was walk around and look. I saw places where they sold bitter-water, and thought I would buy some. I had tasted it before, but never enough. The first place I went into the man said, "Hey, Injun, get the hell out of here."

Then I went into another, and I spoke in Mexican before the man noticed me. So he sold me drinks. I bought a lot. They cost ten cents, and I spent a dollar for them. Then I felt so good I began to dance a little bit. One of the men said, "Hey, that Greaser's drunk, throw him out."

They threw me out. One of them kicked me hard when I went through the door. I fell down in the snow. My sight was red with anger. I walked away, out of the town, to the woods where my things were. There I made ready for the war-path—let down my hair, and took off my American clothes. I thought, none of the people in that town carry guns. Now I shall take my very good gun and shoot them, all those people. I shall burn their houses. While I am doing this, I shall find Northern Maiden; her I shall take away, and go back to my own country, with many horses, and much plunder. That way I thought.

I began making war medicine, praying to the Twin Gods. I held my gun across my knees, that my medicine should be strong for it, too. Praying like that, I fell asleep there in the middle. That is a bad thing.

When I woke up, it was night, and I was cold. I was shivering. The fire was out. My head hurt. When I thought how I had gone to sleep in the middle of my prayer, I was afraid. I put on my clothes, and made a fire with my fire drill. Then I prayed, for a long time I was praying. But my prayer would not go up; it fell down where I said it. All of a sudden I was sick for my own country, for the smell of dust on the trail when the sun is on it, for the sound of my horse's hoofs in the sand. My heart was sick for the blue South, where the rainbow is, and tall corn growing by red rocks. I remembered the smoke of my mother's fire, and the thumping as she pounded the warp down in the loom.

Then I thought how far I had come, and how I was near to Northern Maiden, and how she was waiting for me. My medicine was very strong, it was the bitter-water that had made me feel like that. I thought that I would be ashamed to go back now, and I was a brave, who did not run away from things. So I rolled up in my blanket and went to sleep again. I was like that, we were warriors in those days.

There was game in the hills behind those woods, so that I had enough to eat. When I was not hunting, I stayed in the town. I stayed eight days, until I began to lose hope. Then I saw her. She was in a wagon with a man. They had two good horses with it; they were not as good as my pinto. I followed them out of town, and saw their tracks in the snow, along a road. Then I ran to my camp.

I threw away my American clothes then. I sang, and while I sang I tied up my hair like a Navajo. My head-band was good, my shirt was worked with porcupine quills, my leggings had many silver buttons. My belt was of silver, my necklaces and bow-guard were heavy with silver and turquoise. I put the silver bridle on my horse, to make him look well, and so that when I gave it to her, with the pinto, she should know it was my own. Then I rode out, still singing.

I looked all around me. I said, the North is not black. The ground is white; where the sun strikes it, it is all-colour. The sky is blue as turquoise. Our old men do not know. I galloped along the trail. I sang the song about the wild-cat, that keeps time with a horse galloping and makes him go faster. That way I felt.

I started in the morning, I got in just after noon. It was a big ranch, there were many horses in the corral, but no sign of cattle. That is not like an American's ranch. They were just getting out of the carriage when I rode in. When they saw me, they cried out. She was surprised, she did not think I would come. I sat still and rolled a cigarette. Inside I was not still. I looked at her, and my heart kept on saying, "beautiful, beautiful," like in a prayer.

She came forward to shake hands with me. Some more men and a woman came out. She told them who I was. One of the men kept on saying, "George, George!" I thought he was calling

someone. Later I found out it was his way of swearing. They were different, those people.

She told me to put my horses in the corral. She went with me while I unsaddled my pony. Her face was flushed, she was glad to see me. I could not speak, I was afraid all those people would see what I was thinking. When we were alone in the corral, I gave her the pinto horse, and the bridle. At first she would not take them. She gave me a room to sleep and keep my things in. Then she took me into the big room where the people were.

There were her brother and his wife. They were good people. There were two other men who were good people. One of them knew Indians, he could talk American so that I could understand everything he said. There was another man who was not good. His mouth was not good. He had yellow hair, but there was a dark cloud around his head. I could see that, especially when he was thinking bad things. I did not like him, that one. There were other people who stayed with them and went away again, but these were there all the time.

They were nice to me. I stayed there a long time. Those men were always going hunting, they took me with them. I was a good hunter, so they thought well of me. They liked a man who could do something better than they could. They thought well of me because I had come so far. They asked me to play cards with them. They did not play cards the way the Americans here taught us, except the man I did not like. I won from them, but never very much. I did not think it was good to win too much from them. They were my friends.

The man I did not like was called Charlie. He, too, wanted Northern Maiden. He was not like those others. Sometimes when they had friends and drank bitter-water, one of the women would tell them they had too much, or one of the other men would. Then they would go out and walk around until they were all right. I did not take anything. Sometimes, when there was another woman staying with them there, one of the men would be making love to her. If she told him to stop, he always stopped. This I saw, different times, when people came to stay with them. But Charlie was the only one who made love to Northern Maiden. He did not stop when she told him to. One day I was coming down the long

room they had that ran between the other rooms. He was out there, trying to kiss her, the way Americans do. I walked up. He got red in the face and went away. I made talk to her as if I had not seen anything.

I stayed there a long time. I thought, when it was time for spring in my own country, I should ask Northern Maiden to come with me, and I thought she would say yes.

One day I was walking into the door of the big room, when I heard someone inside say my name. Horse-Tamer they said, that was my name, that people used. The man's voice was angry, so I listened. I could not understand everything that they said, they were talking fast in American. But I understood that Charlie was telling them that I cheated at cards. This made them angry. They said that if they caught me, they would run me out. They called me a damn Indian. I was angry; because I knew that Charlie cheated, too, as I have said. I did not understand this, so I went to Northern Maiden.

I told her that the cowpunchers taught us to cheat at cards, that we thought it was part of that game. An Indian is better at it than an American. I did not say anything about Charlie. She said that her kind of American did not cheat at cards, any more than they told lies. They were always honest. So they trusted everyone who played in a game, that was why they were so angry. They would run out any one who cheated when they trusted him. Then I understood.

I took my money and went in where they were. I said, "Here is your money, that I have won at cards. I did not know you did not cheat, until I heard you talking. The Americans who played with us always cheated. Now I will not cheat. That is my word. It is strong."

Northern Maiden's brother said, "The Indian's all right."

The other one, who knew about Indians, said, "Yes, what he says is true. He will not cheat any more. Let him play."

Charlie was angry, but he was afraid to say anything.

So then I played with them some more, and I watched Charlie. I knew what I wanted to do, and I took my time, like a good hunter. Finally my chance came, it was like this—We were playing poker. Charlie used to hide a good card from the pack. When he thought he could use it, he put it in the palm of his hand. Then when he

reached down to pick up his draw cards, he mixed it with them. He discarded one more card than he should. Sometimes he slipped it in with the other discards; sometimes, if it was a good card, he kept it out. I knew it would be no good to find the card in his clothes, they would think I had put it there. I had to catch it in his hand, and he was quick.

This time there were a lot of people there, some men from other ranches, cowpunchers. There was a lot of money, and Charlie got excited. I was sitting next him. He did not like to see me next him. I waited till I saw he was about to use his card. I got my knife ready. When his hand was sliding along the table, before he got to the draw, I put my knife through it. He screamed, and everyone jumped up. I took out my knife. There was the ace of diamonds, and he held two other aces.

Charlie went out of the room. He was white in the face. The cowpunchers stood around for a little while, then they went away, too. I said nothing, waiting for them to thank me. These three men, the ones who lived in the house, went off into a corner and talked. I could not hear what they said. Something was wrong.

The man who understood about Indians came over to me. The rest went out.

"Now," he said, "you must go away. It is not your fault. Charlie is one of us. You were right to show that he cheated, but not in front of all those cowpunchers. Now we have lost face with them. We are all made ashamed. You should have told us, and we should have caught him when no one else was here. When we see you, you will make us remember that you, an Indian, showed up our friend in front of those people. When you are here, we shall be ashamed. If a white man caught a friend of yours in front of a lot of Moqui, would you like it?"

I said, "I see. Now I go."

He shook hands with me. "You are a good man," he said, "I want to be friends with you. I shall come and see you on your reservation. We shall hunt together."

I said, "Your talk is straight. It is good. Now I want meat and coffee and sugar to take on the trail."

He brought me what I needed while I was saddling my horse. He gave me the money Charlie had won from me. He wanted to give me more.

"He will go to the train to-morrow," he said, "he is too weak now, you made him bleed a lot."

It was in the middle of the afternoon that I rode away. I went up to a high hill behind the ranch-house. There I made camp. When I had a fire lighted, a little one that would not make smoke, I began my medicine. It was not good. My prayers fell away, down into the valley. I saw that a man could not pray there, where there was only one direction, North, the Black One. I wanted to go back to where there was East, and South, and West, Mother-of-Pearl dawn, Blue Turquoise, and Red Shell. I prayed the best I could. I used the last of my corn pollen. When the sun set, I made black paint with ashes. I drew the Bows of the Twin Gods on my chest. I put a black line on my forehead. I stripped to my breech-clout, moccasins, and head-band. I took off all my jewellery except my bow-guard. I took my bow, because a gun makes too much noise. Long after it was black night I went back to the ranch.

They were all in the big room, except Charlie, sitting round the fire. I came in quietly. I hid in a corner behind a chair. All the time I had my bow ready. They did not say much, but sat, not talking. One by one, they got up to go to bed. I was hoping that Northern Maiden would be the last, but if she was not, I had enough arrows. I could not have come so well to her bedroom, it was upstairs. That house was built like a Moqui house, with two floors.

My medicine was good. She stayed sitting and looking at the fire. I could see that she was sad. That did my heart good. In the fire-light she was beautiful. I stood up.

Then Charlie came into the room. I was in the corner. I did not move. He never saw me. I made ready to shoot him. He walked over until he stood in front of Northern Maiden. For a little while they looked at each other. I waited. Then he spoke.

"I'm sorry."

She said nothing.

"Can't you forgive me?"

Then she spoke to him. She got up and stood very straight. I could not understand all those things, that they said. They were talking in American, and using words I did not know. They used words we have not got. But this I understood. She loved him.

Now she sent him away, for the thing he had done. She said she was very angry. But I saw that she loved him. She gave him a ring, the ring that Americans give when they are going to marry a woman. Now she gave it back to him. I saw she was that kind, that she sent him away, although she loved him, because his heart was bad. She told him that he was like a snake. She meant he was all bad.

He went away again, holding his face down. His hand was tied up. He looked like a sick man. I let him go.

Northern Maiden sat down in the chair. She began to cry, like an American, hard, so that it hurts, and does no good. I came, then, and stood in front of her. She looked up. She did not start. She was not afraid of me.

I said, "I did not know, now I do; I would not have done this. Here is the bracelet you gave me. I should not have it."

She said, "I understand."

Then I went away. I rode all night.

I came home at the time of short corn. I had twelve good horses with me. I met a man prospecting in Chiz-Na-Zolchi. I got a good mule from him. These I showed to the people who asked me why I went away. It was good to see the canyons again, with the washes full of water from the snow. It was good to hear my horse's hoofs in the sand, and smell the dust of the trail.

I sat down by my mother's fire. The smoke was rising up straight. She was weaving a man's blanket. She said, "This is for you, your blanket is worn out. You must choose yourself a wife, you are too much alone. That is the best medicine for you, to have a house and children. When the corn is green, tell me the one you want. I shall ask for her."

I saw that she was right. I said, "It is good. You will ask for one."

But I did not care if she were old or young, beautiful or ugly.

NOT THEATRE, NOT LITERATURE, NOT PAINTING

BY RALPH BLOCK

AN art may have a large body of aesthetic tradition and be moribund. It may have none to speak of and be very much alive. The movies are this kind of art. It is not possible to understand them, much less truthfully see them, within the limitations, judgments, and discriminations of the aesthetic viewpoint. The movies are implicit in modern life; they are in their very exaggerations—as a living art often may be—an essentialization of that which they reflect. To accurately size them up, they should be seen functionally, phenomenally, in relation to their audience.

Like music, painting, and the drama in their primitive stages, the movies are manifestations in some kind of aesthetic form of a social will and even of a mass religion. They are in effect a powerful psychic magnet, an educating force which draws submerged dreams from hidden places to the surface of the common life. By releasing wishes which are on the margin of accepted behaviour, they partake of the social function of art. In a transitional civilization the *mores* of the people no longer reflect their real social and tribal requirements, nor to any appreciable extent their individual and social hungers. The movies help to disintegrate that which is socially traditional, and to clear the field for that which, if not forbidden, has been at least close to the shade of the tabooed.

Primitive art is usually recognized as art only after it has become classical. In the manner of all primitive expression, the movies violate accepted contemporary canons of taste. Even as they arouse the sentinels of moral tradition, so they draw the attack of aestheticians, who are unconsciously measuring expressive works by the standards of those arts that have completed their cycle, especially painting and sculpture. But it is absurd to praise or blame the movies in their present state, or do any more than try to understand them. Whether the movies or what they reflect represent the Good Life depends on whose Good Life is being selected. They exist—massively, ubiquitous. It will be time enough to judge them as an art when they become a historical method of presenting selected truth, mellowed and tested by time, and captured by an

audience saturated with tradition—acclimated by use to an understanding of the laws, intentions, and refinements of the medium. The movies by that time will have lost their excitement, but at least they will be aesthetically correct.

The movie is a primitive art, equally as the machine age is a new primitive period in time. But being a machine, the motion camera is not a simple instrument. Like the pianoforte, it is an evolved instrument, predicated on the existence and development of other forms. It is itself still in an evolving state. Indeed those who make use of it and those who appreciate it without empirical knowledge of its use, have failed to grasp, except in a loose intuitive sense, a full understanding of the complicated laws that govern it. Here and there in its past performance are startling bits of technical excellence, discoveries of how the instrument may be properly used in its own field. Bound together these form a rude body of technique, already complicated, but not yet pushed to any important limits by personal genius, nor classified significantly in use by any development of important schools.

It is fashionable to say that the camera is impersonal, but those who use the camera know this is untrue. Indeed, even abstractly, it is no more impersonal than a steel chisel, or a camel's hair brush. The camera is on the one hand as intimate as the imagination of those who direct it; on the other hand it has a peculiar selective power of its own. Its mechanism is governed by an arbitrary set of rhythms—sixteen images to each foot of celluloid—and reality is seized by the camera according to a mathematical ratio, established between the tempo of what is in front of the lens and the tempo of the machine itself. The camera is also governed by another set of relations, which have to do with light and its refraction through lenses. These are no less arbitrary in a physical sense, but within their limits they are open to a large number of gradations and variations, according to the human will behind them. Far from being impersonal, the camera may be said to have pronounced prejudices of rhythm.

Most critical discussion of pantomime in the movies is vapour. Screen pantomime is not pantomime in the conventional Punch and Judy sense. In the theatre, pantomime is in the large, a matter of long curves of movement. On the screen the lens intervenes between the eye and its objective. The camera not only magnifies movement but it also analyses action, showing its incompletions. It is indeed more prejudiced than the human eye itself, helping the

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eye to detect false rhythms in the utterance of action, or an absence of relationship between sequences of movement, where the eye alone might fail. The intervention of the camera necessitates not only a modification of what might be called the wave length of pantomime for the screen, but also a more closely knitted flow of movement. Traditional pantomime on the stage is a highly schematized and rigid organization of units of movement in which every motion has a definite traditional meaning. But for the camera, movement must be living, warm, vital, and flowing rather than set and defined in an alphabet of traditional interpretation. Like Bergsonian time, it must seem to renew and recreate itself out of the crest of each present moment. It is in this sense that it resembles music. It is also because of this necessity that the stage actor who essays the screen is often exposed at the outset in all the barrenness of habitual gesture and stock phrasing of movement.

Experience rather than theory has taught many actors on the screen the need of plasticity, composure, modulation of gesture, and an understanding of how to space movement—a sense of timing. The screen actor at his best—the Beerys, Menjous, and Negris—tries to give fluency to pantomime, so that action may melt out of repose into repose again, even in those moments when an illusion of arrested action is intended. He recognizes that against his own movement as a living organic action is the cross movement of the celluloid. It is only by long experience that the motion picture actor discovers a timing which is properly related to the machine; but that experience has already produced screen pantomimists whose rhythmic freshness and vitality the modern stage can rarely match.

The actor is the living punctuation of reality. He is conscious and has the power to make his action valid in an imaginative sense. But Appearance—the face of Nature—is itself sprawling and only vaguely connotative. Words are packed with the reverberations of human history; Appearance on the other hand, must be selected, organized, and related to ideas that conform to the limitations and possibilities of the camera, before it can be robbed of inanity and made significant.

All this is the function of the director. The movies are full of mediocre directors. But, comparatively, there are not as many poor motion picture directors as there are poor musicians, painters, and creative writers in the world; it is easier to go to school and

become any of these than it is to direct a motion picture. In its present state of development, motion picture direction demands not only logic, tact, sensibility, the ability to organize and control human beings and multifarious materials, and the power to tell a story dramatically, but it also requires a gift which cannot be learned in any school. This is a richness, even grossness, in the director's feeling for Life, an abundance of perception, a copious emotional reflex to the ill-assorted procession of existence.

Good motion picture direction has little to do with literacy or cultivation in its conventional sense. Several of the most cultivated and literate gentlemen in the movies are among the most prosaic directors. They have brought with them a knowledge of other arts, which has blinded them to the essential quality of the camera. They think of the movies as a form of the theatre, of literature, or of painting. It is none of these things. It demands at best a unique kind of imagination which parallels these arts but does not stem from them. It is true that the rigid economic organization of the modern studio demands the same kind of prevision and preparation on the part of the director as on the part of any other creator. Even aside from urgencies of this kind, the St Clairs, Lubitschs, Duponts, Einsteins, are under the same imaginative necessity to organize their material as a Cézanne or Beethoven. But there the similarity ceases. Directors of this kind know that their greatest need is the power to seize reality—in its widest sense—and make it significant in forms of motion. This power, this understanding, is a gift by itself. It requires a special kind of eye, a special kind of feeling about the relationship between things and things, events and events, and an intuitive as well as empirical knowledge of how to make the camera catch what that eye sees and that imagination feels. It has nothing to do with words, as such, nor with history or politics or any of the traditional matters which are politely assumed to represent cultivation, and which so often debase the metal of the imagination.

The movie is in other words a new way in which to see life. It is a way born to meet the needs of a new life. It is a way of using the machine to see what the machine has done to human beings. It is for this reason that the best motion picture directors arise from strange backgrounds, with a secure grasp on techniques of living rather than on academic attitudes. They are not always preoccupied with proving that life is so small that it can be caught in the

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net of art. It is the pragmatic sanction hovering over them which offends academicians.

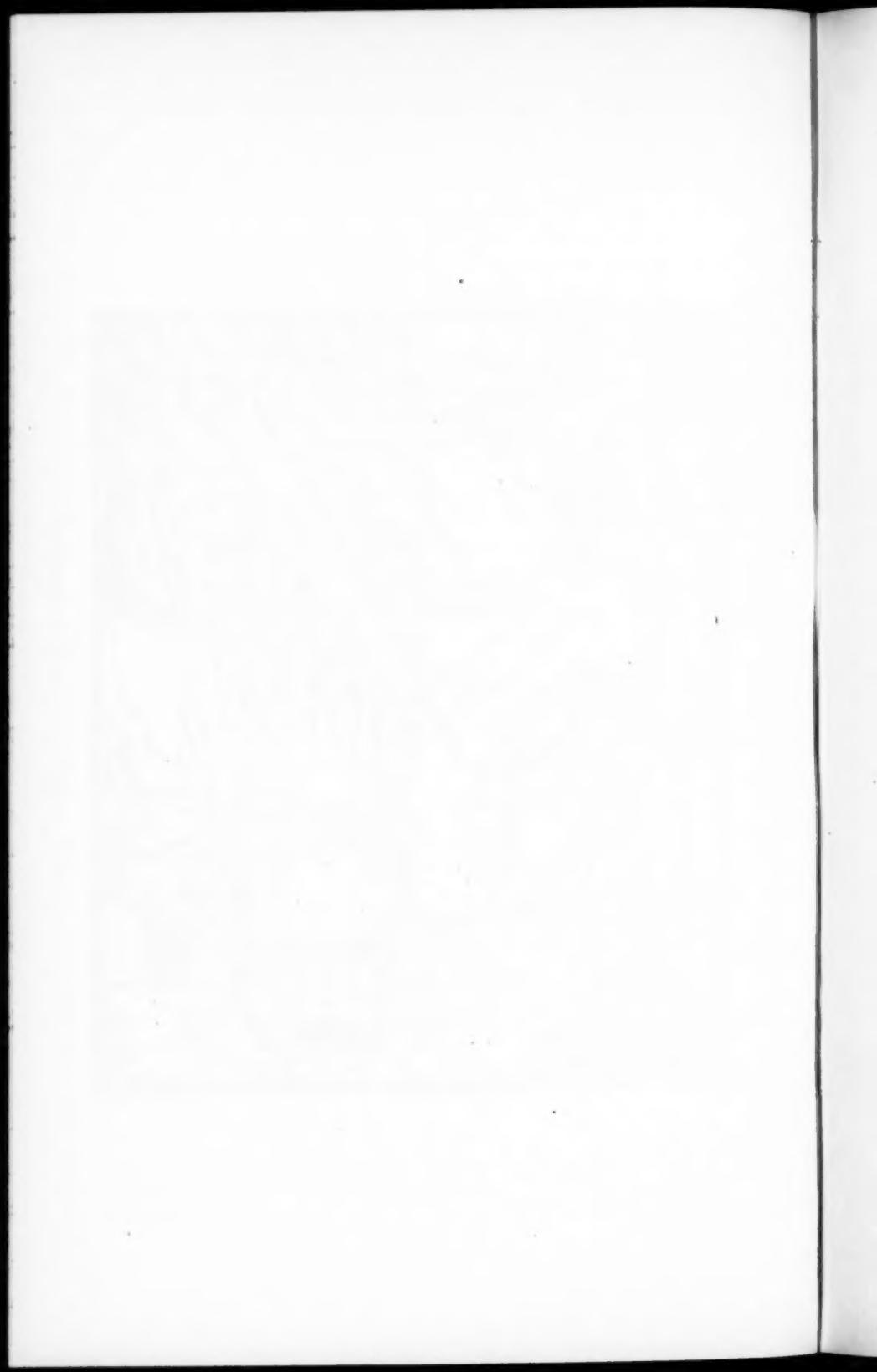
Here and there are indications that the movie is arising out of its phenomenalistic background into the level now occupied by the novel, and the theatre, touched by the same spirit of light irony, and predicated the orientation of a special audience. But there are no signs at the moment that it can rise higher than this point. Pictures such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* are interesting laboratory results in experimental psychology, but they have as little to do with the direct succession of the motion picture as *Madame Tussaud's* has to do with Rodin. *The Last Laugh* and *The Battleship Potemkin* are technical explosions, important only in their power to destroy old procedures and light the path ahead.

American directors have always mistaken cruelty on the one hand and sentimental realism on the other, for irony. Satisfaction for the sadistic hunger of the crowd is present in almost all popular entertainment. Griffith early understood this crowd desire, and his technique in exploiting it has filtered through a thousand pictures since. De Mille, Von Stroheim, Brennon, and the many unnamed have all used it in one form or other. But none has reached irony empty of brutality—an unobstructed godlike view of the miscalculations of existence, yet touched by human compassion. There are no Hardys nor Chekhovs in the movies. *The Last Laugh* dribbled out into German sentimentality, although in substance it seemed familiarly like one of Constance Garnett's translations. The comedians—Keaton and Langdon as well as Chaplin—have touched near the edge of true irony, but only as children might. Chaplin rose to the intention in *A Woman of Paris*, but his forms were conventional and worn, cast in the *clichés* of irony of cheap fiction.

In the end, what remains wonderful about the movie is its instrument. Its ideas are still sentimental or bizarre, reflecting the easy hungers of life, and of to-day's shifting surface of life; it fails as yet to draw from the deep clear wells of human existence. Aside from its need of another kind of audience—even another world, a deep ironic point of view in the motion picture would require a great individual spirit equipped with a true knowledge of the medium. And none of this kind has arisen. He is rare in any art and any time.

WATERFRONT. BY MAURICE DE VLAMINCK





THE ROBBER

BY HELEN FITZGERALD

TELL us the story of your grandmother and the robber!" said one.

"*Gia!* I do not know if I can—" she began. Then she went on. "About a hundred years ago my grandmother lived here on the Lago di Como. She was a widow. She rented a *casina* and a little piece of land from a rich landlord, and she raised hay and corn and kept a few goats and silk-worms, and maybe a cow.

Ecco! Anyway—once she was cutting hay in the field, when a man with a stiletto in his mouth, ran past. He went only a little further and climbed a great *castagno*—what is it you say in English?"

"Chestnut-tree," prompted the girl.

"*E vero!* He climbed into the thick branches and lay still, completely hidden. Some soldiers came running up. They were red in the face and puffing for breath. They stopped and asked my grandmother if she had seen a man go by.

"I see nothing. I hear nothing. I do my work," she said, and went on cutting hay.

"*Sacramento! Impossibile!* You lie," the soldiers cried. He must have passed here. We saw him run in this direction. You could not fail to see, *Signora!* He is a robber, a prisoner, who has escaped. How dare you cut your damned hay! It is hard to track him."

"I tell you, I hear nothing. I see nothing. I am a poor old woman. I do my work."

They made an angry gesture. 'She is a poor old fool,' they said.

'*Ecco! non ce ne più,*' one added mockingly, and tapped his head."

"Nobody home," the girl explained.

"Looking all around, they never thought to glance *up* at the strange bird in the tree! *Stupido!* They could have touched him! Then in hot haste they hurried off. As soon as they were out of sight the fugitive came down from his hiding-place. He had heard and seen all.

'Grazie mille, Signora. A woman who can hold her tongue! You are a rare creature. Perhaps some day, by the grace of the *bella Madonna*, I may do a good deed for you. *Chi sa? Buon giorno! Buona continuata!* I will pray for you.'

He bowed low.

'I see nothing. I hear nothing. I do my work,' answered my grandmother, as never stopping she cut hay.

One evening soon after, she was cooking *polenta* over the big stone fire-place. The flames made the polished copper shine. She loved her copper kettles and coffee-pot as great ladies do their jewels. She was watching the twinkling lights upon them when there was a rap, rap at the door.

'*Avante,*' she called, thinking it was some neighbour, or a *bambino* come to buy goat's milk.

Ma! It was not so! But a tall man, cloaked and masked.

'*Scusi, Signora,*' said a deep voice, 'I have come to reward you. By your wisdom and prudence you saved the life of my chief. From the *castagno* he heard and saw all. He is a great man, *Signora*, and his followers love him. The rich call him bandit, but the poor call him friend. He never forgets his friends: also he never forgets his enemies. You have been his friend, *Signora*. Therefore he wishes to make you a present. Here is silver. It will make your old age happier.'

He laid on the table a silk purse with silver in it—indeed a fortune for my grandmother. But she answered, wagging her head:

'*Non, Signore.* I will not take the money. I see nothing. I hear nothing. I cut my hay. That is all. If I take this money from the man you say is a bandit, some day maybe he will want it back and kill me. *Non, Signore!* I will not have it! Take it back to him. I am a poor old woman, but I do my work. *Buona sera, Signore.* *Buona passeggiata.*'

She moved with him to the door.

'*Ecco! va bene, Signora!*' he answered with a shrug, bowing and putting the purse in his pocket, the silver pieces ringing as he did so, like the bells in the *campanile*!

The summer passed. The first fall of snow shone on the peak of La Legnone. The corn was gathered and dried for *polenta* and the last crop of hay had been cut and stored. The two sheep had been sheared and the wool was ready to spin. Just at this time the landlord raised the rent to a price my grandmother could not

pay. The poor old woman was nearly mad. She told the *Padre*, thinking he could advise her what to do. But all he said was:

'*Pazienza, Signora! Pazienza!* The Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb!' And he recommended a certain number of Ave Marias.

When she went to the village post office, where everybody came to gossip, she told the neighbours. She told the story again at the *albergo* where she went for her *fiasco* of *chianti*. She told everybody she met. She could think of nothing else. She could talk of nothing else. You see she was getting—what do you say?"

"Childish, mother," the girl put in.

"*Ecco!* Childish she was, *veramente!* Everybody listened to her. Everybody was sorry for her. Everybody agreed that the *egregio* landlord, who was rich off the toil of the poor, was a brute, *proprio*. But nobody *did* more than talk. And talk never pays the rent—*è vero?* There was just one thing for my grandmother to do—to get out. To get out at the beginning of the winter, with no place to go was terrible. It was death.

The news spread from village to village. If it had been printed in the *Corriere della Sera* it could not have been more advertised. She could not get the money. She tried to sell her copper. Nobody wanted copper. She tried to sell her goats at the market. Nobody wanted goats. Everyone was too poor—but not quite so poor as she.

One evening she sat by the fire trying to spin, but her hands dropped in her lap. For the first time they forgot the habit of work. *Già!* they had seldom been still for fifty years and more. What was the use? Her eyes were dim with tears as she looked up at the walls with the copper shining like the halo of the Saints, the strings of garlic and the neat bunches of sweet rosemary and thyme, the ears of ripe corn drying so they could be ground into meal, and the image of the blessed Madonna with a lighted candle beneath. Most of her life had been lived there. In the matrimonial bed in the corner under the crucifix, her husband had died. Her children had been born there. Some had died there—*Santa Madonna*, rest their souls! Others had grown up, gone out of the door, and forgotten. That was the saddest thing of all. Now in her old age she sat alone in the little *casina* which was all she had left. And it was going, as everything dear in life had gone before. Tears ran down her cheeks. She muttered to herself, though there

was no one to hear but the old goat, who knew too much for a *bestia* (she was certain he suspected her of trying to sell him) and the red cock who was roosting on the back of a chair.

Suddenly there was a sharp rap on the door. She started with fright. The chickens in the corner stirred. The cock flapped his wings.

Ecco, it might be the landlord's man? She made the sign of the cross and wiped the tears from her wrinkles.

'*Avante!*' she called. Her voice cracked and her hands shook as she fumbled with the wool.

'*Buona sera, Signora, come sta?*' a man's voice said as a stranger stepped out of the dark into the fire-light and the light of the candle. He was a dare-devil with twinkling eyes. His black moustaches made his teeth look very white when he smiled. And *ecco* it was a pleasant smile! He threw back his long mantle. A scarlet sash was tied in a knot about his waist, and in it a stiletto shone. He wore high boots, dusty from travelling. He had the gracefulness of a—what do you call the singers who went about in the old days?"

"Troubadour," prompted the girl.

"*Ecco!* Troubadour! The old woman was dumb. She could not believe her eyes. This was the man who had run past her in the hay field and had hidden in the *castagno*. He looked so different then, wild with pursuit, stained with dust and sweat, running for his life! But there was no mistaking him—a *diavolo* one could not forget! He smiled as he watched her expression change from fear to amazement.

'*Ecco, Signora!* You remember me, *è vero?* *Si*, I am the man you saved by holding your tongue and knowing nothing. That is a rare virtue for a woman—especially for an old woman. Things have changed, *Signora*. It is you who are in trouble now.'

'How did the *egregio Signore* know?' she stammered.

'*Egregio Signore?* Since when have I become lordly? Last time it was bandit, or robber, if my friend reported you correctly, *è vero?* And how did I know of your trouble? Who does *not* know? You see in my—profession, I come and go like the wind, observing, but not observed. I have heard the peasants talk. This time you have *not* held your tongue. You have wagged it like the bell of a grazing goat. And in that you were wise. A woman who knows when to be silent and when to talk! A miracle!"

He fixed his dark eyes on my grandmother's as though he could read her thoughts—if she had any.

'*Egregio Signore* or robber, *madama*, it matters not which I am—that is a matter of opinion. Usually, if a robber steals enough he is an *egregio Signore* or even a *Duca*, but if he steals only a little he is a thief. The important thing is, I have not forgotten that I owe you my liberty—perhaps my life. I have come to pay my debts. It is my turn to serve you and you will not refuse. But you must do exactly as I say. *Attenzione!* You will send word to your landlord that you will pay the rent to-morrow night. He must come here for it—or send his agent—after dark. Mind that you get a written receipt from him. And in the meantime hold your tongue as well as you held it the day the soldiers questioned you about me!'

My grandmother was speechless. After awhile she said:

'*Ecco! Benissimo, Signore.*' Then remembering the words of the good *Padre*, she lifted her eyes to the image of the Madonna and murmured, crossing herself:

'The Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb!'

'*Sacramento!* He chooses strange weathercocks to show which way the wind blows!' the stranger said, with a laugh.

He asked her how large a sum she needed. She named it.

'I will be here to-morrow evening with the money,' he said. '*Buona notte, Signora. Buon riposo!*'

He smiled, bowed low, and was off before she could return his *saluti* or offer a prayer for him.

She obeyed him *exactamente*. She sent word to the landlord that she was ready to pay the rent if he would mend the leak in her roof. She was too ill to go to him, so would he call as he rode by, or send someone? At the same time she would show him the bad place in the roof. She would have the money ready in the evening after eight o'clock.

The cloaked stranger appeared as he had promised. He counted the total of the rent—and a little besides to drink *saluti*.

'I must be off,' he said, with a sweeping bow. '*Buona fortuna, Signora.* May you continue to cut hay in your own field! May the field bear a rich harvest always and may the Lord always temper the wind to the shorn lamb! *Addio!*'

He was gone! His movements were quicker than her wits. Before she could collect her thoughts to thank him the door had

closed behind him and she stood bewildered, mumbling bits of prayers for him.

The landlord followed quickly on the stranger's heels. He was a *superbo* man of large estates, who had made his fortune by—what do you say, now?"

"Extorting, mother—graft."

"Extorting! So it was! Extorting heavy rents from the *contadini*. He expected some excuse, or piteous story and his face was cruel when he entered. He would listen to nothing. Not he! The money or—*Scappato!* But when he saw the pile of silver shining in the candlelight he almost smiled. The old woman curtseyed. Reverence was due the lord even if he was no better than a robber.

'*Ecco, Signore*,' she said, 'the rent. It came to me from one of my sons. He wishes to know that you have received it, and I have not spent it foolishly. Will it please your lordship to give me a written receipt? I will send it to my son, *Signore*, and he will be satisfied.'

He gathered up the money, counted it, wrote a receipt, signed it, and handed it to her.

'*Buono!* There was something you wished to show me?' he said.

'*Si, si, Signore*,' she answered, pointing to the roof. 'There is a leak.'

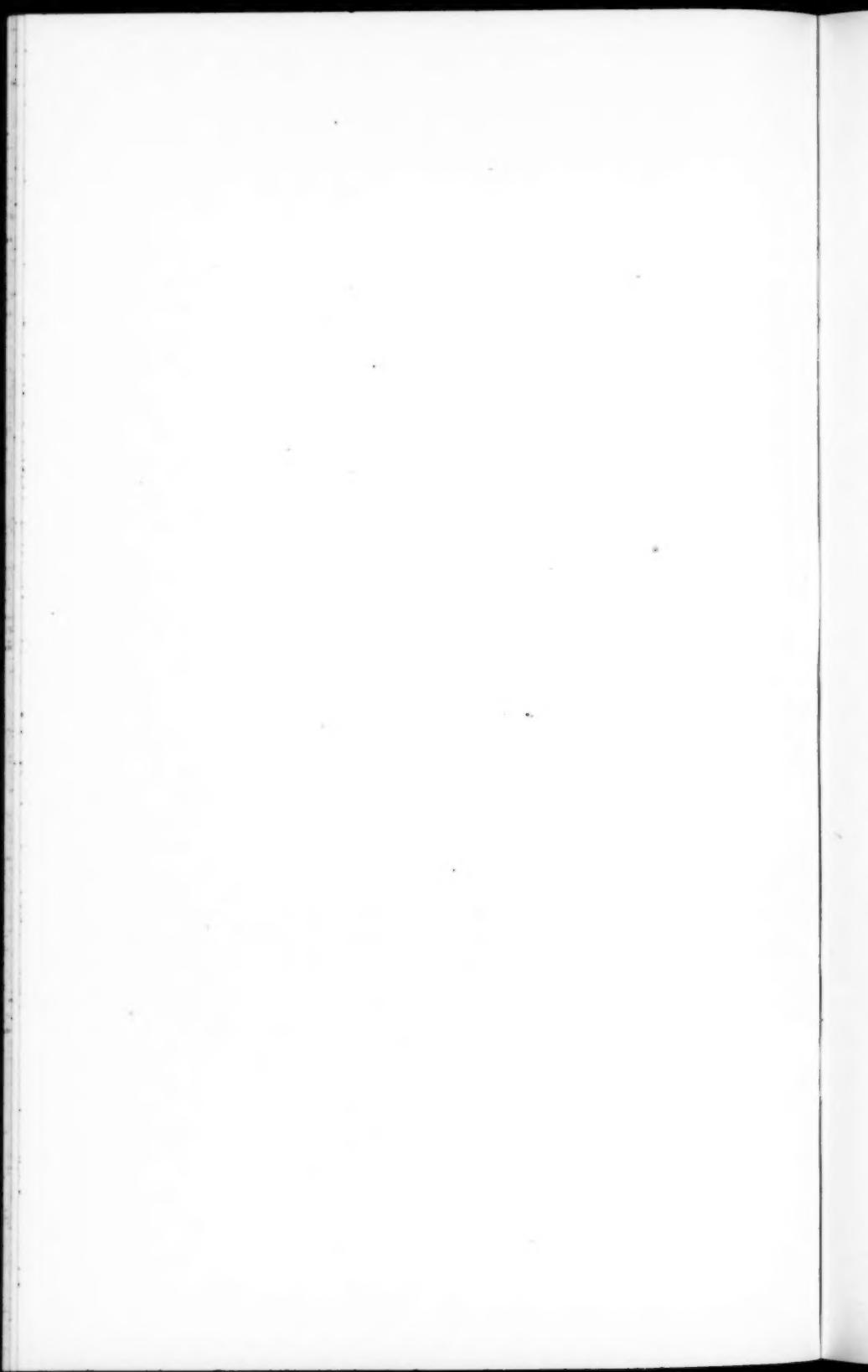
'It shall be attended to,' he replied.

Next morning there was great excitement! The night before, in a dense piece of woods, on his way home, the landlord had been robbed! Everybody rejoiced—in secret, of course. It was talked about at the post office, the Church, and the *alberghi* for weeks. The robber was never found. My grandmother knew quite well who it was, but when she was questioned, she shook her head and answered:

'I am a poor old woman. I see nothing. I hear nothing. I do my work.' "

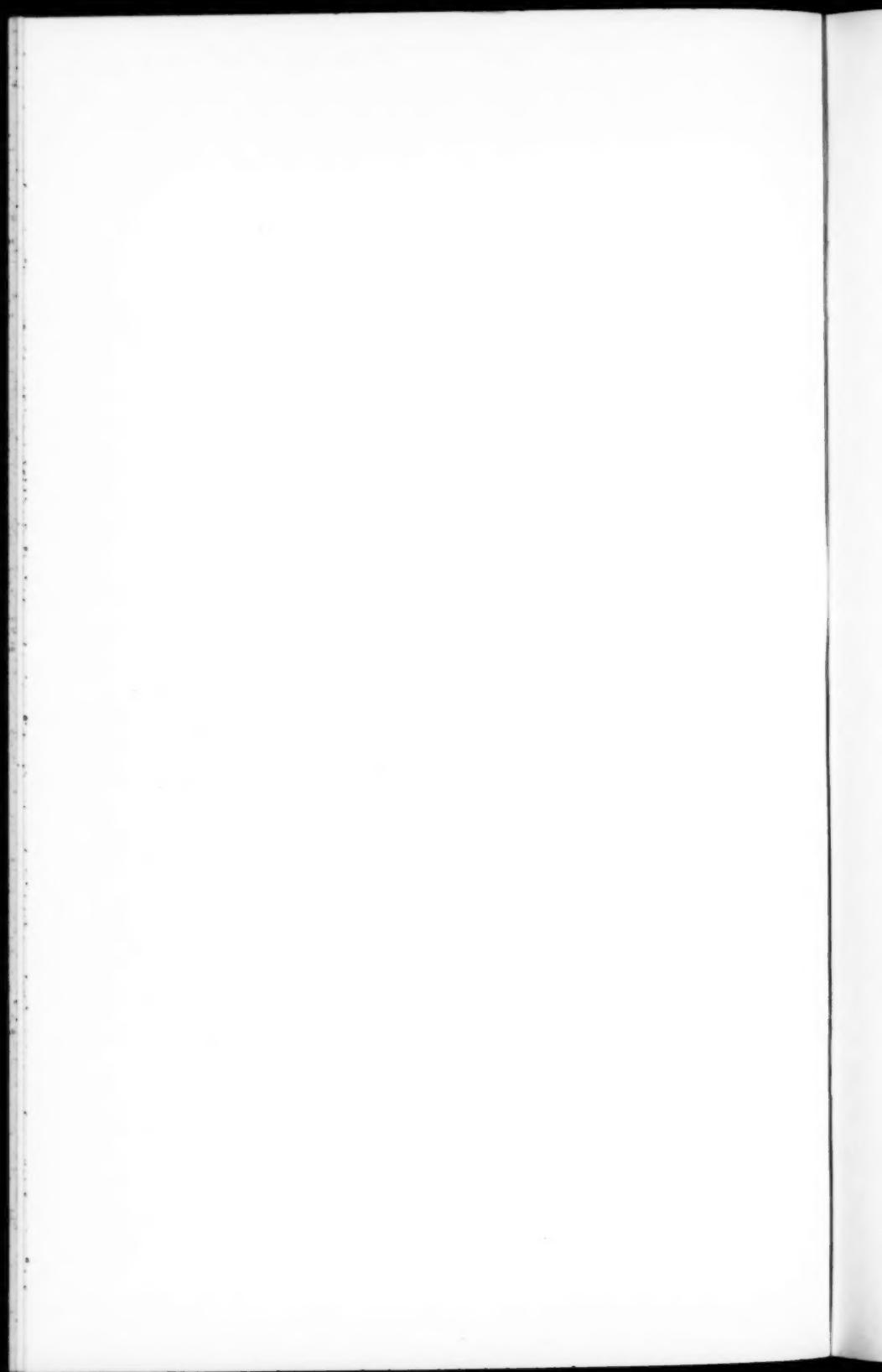


GIRL'S HEAD. BY SASCHA KRONBURG



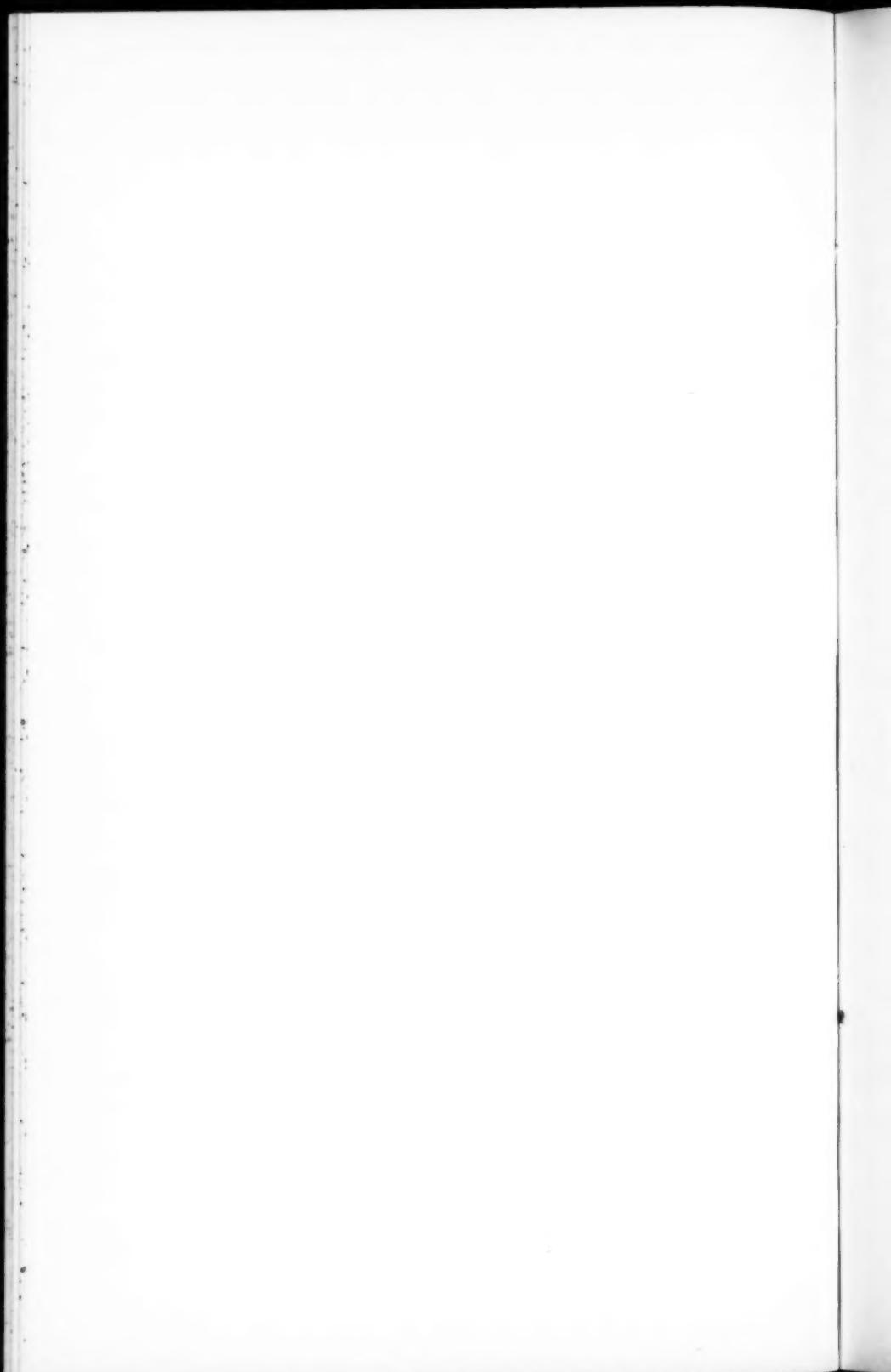


WAR. BY SASCHA KRONBURG





ST. FRANCIS AND THE POOR. BY SASCHA KRONBURG



THE BARN-YARD

BY YVOR WINTERS

The wind appears
and disappears
like breath on a mirror
and between the hills
is only cold
that lies
beneath the stones
and in the grass.
The sleeping dog
becomes a
knot of twinging turf.
It was the
spring that left
this rubbish
and these scavengers
for ice to kill—
this old man
wrinkled in
the fear of hell, the
child that staggers
straight into
the clotting cold
with short fierce cries.

MEMORIES

BY LEON SRABIAN HERALD

II

IN OUR HOUSE

EVERYWHERE, like the multi-coloured birds which were leaving the village, the fruits had disappeared from branch and vine and shrub as the frost was settling. Our Nor-ding only, like a deep-buried lucrative mine, was still yielding even though its grapes had been carried away all through the summer in sieves, on heads, in large baskets, on horseback, and in aprons and pails. No one slept in the vineyards any longer; people were settled in their homes again at night, and the guarding of our grapes against increasing looters was a great responsibility. My parents Lazarus and Vartouhi, and other valiant relatives of ours had taken this risky watchmanship out of our hands—Ohannes' and mine—although Ohannes still stayed with them. For it was not many days since Ananias had been stoned nearly to death and found by the children in the morning, his head cracked in various places, almost unconscious.

In our house several rooms were packed with basketfuls of melons, grapes, and other fruits. My sister Helena and her friend, my younger brothers and I, were left at home, the girls and I sleeping in the outermost room where only space was to be had.

At a late hour hearing footsteps on the street, the girls began to whisper to each other. First I heard them speak of fear. Then their whispers turned upon a more interesting subject which made my attention sit up on its hind legs like a curious animal. I was delighted.

"I wish Oscan would come; I wish those footsteps were his," was Acabin's secret suggestion.

Someone coughed.

"It's Nisho, the destitute of hair." They giggled.

But "Levon—Levon!" warned Helena, her voice infused with joy.

"He is asleep." Giggles.

I did not answer, happy in suspecting what it was about and anxious to hear these girls converse about their favourite young men. It was a child's golden opportunity to experience this—to hear two young girls talking in private of such matters. Acabin called again, to make sure that I was sleeping. I did not answer, hardly able to check the laughter beating at my cheeks from inside like a swarm of caged birds. Quite convinced that I was fast asleep, they began their golden revelations.

Acabin said how often she had seen Oscar that week and had talked to him, how happy she was that her meeting him was not known to any one else, her sister approving of the match, and how thrilling would the day be when it came. But I was most anxious to hear what my sister would say; I so liked to think of having a brother-in-law and would have liked to know who this fortunate one could be, for Helena was the favourite of the village, although none had yet dared ask her hand of my stern, refusing father.

At last she began with a familiar comic song, the author of which was a recent bride whose husband was a numskull:

"Mine is better than the rest;
He can read, he can write,
And he sings
In the choir.
Mine is better than the rest."

"Mine," she added, "is the *head* of the choir."

Cutting grief then pierced her, so serious, so simple, making me feel sorry for her. "My father won't let me have him," she said, "he is a bully; not satisfied with domineering over everybody in the village, he bullies me too. Mother told me." From that time on such a deep devotion developed in me toward my sister's future mate, though she never married him because of my father's bullying, that I could not later love the man she married, half so much.

I thought of a prank. I wanted to tell them I had overheard

what they said and would with all delight be their confidant, but modified my intention in a way which resulted for me in misfortune and ignominy too; I threw at them some of the berries of grapes which were all around me.

Silence.

"What's that?"

"Berries of grapes; here is one."

"Thieves wouldn't do that. It's someone that knows us."

"He knows we are alone." Acabin referring to Oscan.

"Suppose people knew that he was here at this hour of night. My father would butcher us."

"Another one! I know it did not come from outside."

"Is that you, Levon?"

My laughter, long suppressed, flew out like wild wings before I could pretend I was asleep.

"Let's get up and choke him!" they said half crest-fallen, half threatening.

"Wait till Mother comes in the morning; just wait. She entrusted us to your protection, and you are doing your best to scare the souls out of us." But I knew they were not so much scared as vexed that their secret had found leakage.

Morning came, Mother came, and the deserved punishment.

"The girls say you scared them last night. How could you?" Though she was severe, her severity did not manifest itself in manual agility. I was ashamed of myself.

Helena, seeing perhaps that I had not got from Mother what I deserved, slapped me. I took a stick and hit her. She cried softly and this made me inwardly sympathize with her more than ever. I should have had sense enough to be satisfied with my sister's slaps; since I hadn't, my mother did what she had thought of doing before. Thereupon, I took my stand outside, in front of the door and wailed savagely to attract the neighbours' attention. Naturally everyone knew that the trouble came from within, from my mother, or I would not have been sitting outside, but near her, to be comforted by her. Kind-hearted neighbours after sympathizing with me, went to plead with her, but this augmented my roars. "Yes, daughter and mother beat me, one after the other," I cried.

"Shut up and come in," my mother called to me, "or I will

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tell your father." But instead, I went away, and did not come back all day. I disliked my sister for some time; my mother also.

One time my mother took sick. As the most learned boy of the family, I had to read the Bible standing at her head, several times a day. Also I had to read another scroll, hand-written, with devils on it, which showed Satan taking their souls from people; Satan and an archangel quarrelling together—one to take the soul, one to protect it; the devil by himself running away with a blood-trickling liver. I hated this, or rather, some sort of incomprehensible revulsion against it, wouldn't let me read it. Yet it was painful to me to refuse, and I battled with myself day after day. It woke me sometimes at night, and in the morning when I got up, the thought of it flogged my mind. Nevertheless, one day to everybody's surprise, I refused.

"What! Not want to read holy books over his mother's bed! He has taken to the devil's ways," they said, and I was anathematized. My younger brother took my place, and sometimes learned sons of the village came at my mother's request to read Hamayil, with the picture on it of the devil choking a woman in childbirth.

My brother was amply rewarded for his perseverance, for as Mother had promised while in bed that when she got well she would go to the feet of St Guiragos several villages away to offer sacrifice, she took him with her and not me. My child's heart broken, I stood and watched as they got ready to leave, as she dressed in her fineries and then mounted the horse with the for-special-occasions saddle on him—my happy, victorious brother behind her and my eldest brother leading the horse. I had kept up courage while the ceremony mocked my defeat. I did not cry, thinking until the last moment that she would take me with her for I had read over her bed when she was sick, longer than all the rest together. But I was left behind unnoticed, with feverish cheeks. I fell sick soon after they left. In the evening my stern father saw this and with his own hands, gave me brandy which made my upset stomach better, but I was still sick the whole week they were away. It was a supreme joy, however, to have my austere father sit by me, asking for my condition and I compared my loss with the gaining of my father's heart; that was something. But whenever I thought of the procession and how it went away without me, I wept and wept. Then quite unexpectedly

he said, "You will make a better journey some day." Although I did not know what he meant or how soon that would be realized, I asked no question and was glad of the promise. He always did things unexpectedly and he did anything he promised.

The neighbours came in from time to time and would say, "Your younger brother has gone with your mother to sacrifice, to see the city and many wonderful places and you haven't been anywhere beyond the village. You ought to be kinder to your mother."

"I don't like to read Hamayil!" I felt like saying but could only stammer, realizing at the same time that I would have to do in life even those things which I did not like to do. What can one tell about people, parents included? They are all "good" and because they are good, they are not afraid to hurt you in any way they like and no one takes special care of you because you are a child.

In autumn when people have housed their livelihood for the winter, their thoughts turn toward their roofs. A sort of clay was rare which when spread on the roof and trampled upon became solid as stone and leak-proof. Upon the question of roofs every villager's thoughts might well focus.

THE HILL OF THE CROSS

Each Sunday evening, before it grew dark, the young people of Put Aringe climbed up the Hill of the Cross joyously to offer weekly homage to the centuries-old cross—to burn candles and to sacrifice roosters. Their energetic voices were like mellow fruit falling upon the village from a tree whose branches were youth. How enviously the older people watched them!

This cross on top of the hill commanding a radius of twenty miles, is said to have been erected by Thadeos and Bartolomeos, Apostles who had chosen Armenia as their field of ministry and were beheaded by an Armenian pagan king. This eloquent memorial was about four feet wide, ten inches thick, and more than six feet high. It must have been deep in the ground to have endured the winds and the rainwash of centuries. Upon it a thick coat of red moss had grown. How suggestive this cross was!—bathed in a nation's blood.

Autumn. There were only two hills in the village from which

clay could be got by the villagers to mend the flat roofs of their houses and barns, against rain and thawing snow. Those who did not clay the roofs, did not sleep when rain fell. Their houses leaked more than it rained outside, leaked even when it did not rain, leak, leak, leak over their winter provisions, their animals, and themselves.

While they trampled it and ran large stone rollers over the clay to make it hard and uniform, one often heard them speak of a relative, a son, or a brother who had left Put Aringe in search of fortune and had become a premier in Constantinople, a professor in Egypt, a merchant of great renown in France, or Russia; a musician, a poet, or a journalist in some other part of the world.

There were, as I have said, only two hills in the village where clay could be got. One was the Hill of the Cross, the other was in poor Oscan's orchard. Oscan protested that it ruined the orchard to travel through it—that, when they pulled clay from under the surface, the people actually pulled the heart-strings of the trees, which were the strings of his own heart.

The representative of the Hill of the Cross was a hallucinating woman named Mary who had recently come as a bride from the village of St Theodoros. Mary was a stranger as well as a strange person. Whether the villagers felt for her prophecies awe or disgust, was hard to say. When any one tried to say something, the word seemed the contrary of his wish. One could express neither love nor contempt for her. They objected that she was too young, too beautiful to be believed. Such oracles should be delivered by an old grandmother who had passed the age of motherhood, not by a bride who had not yet even been a mother. They were firm in their opinion, since nothing she foretold ever took place. Yet this prophecy sounded different. It was something to think about—the explanation that she gave to the people of Put Aringe, of this cross. It had seemed a simple sign of Christ, the hand of God, an emblem showing that Armenia had been a Christian country for many reasons, and ages.

During the week in which Mary heard that clay was to be got from the Hill of the Cross, on Sunday evening, at the foot of the cross she assumed terrific manners of explanation. She performed in the open—on top of the hill solely for the young people who were not accustomed to hearing messages of religion other than from the priest and in the church. After saying incomprehensible

things, and tearing her hair, she went, down the steep hill straight as an arrow, and was found at the foot, writhing, and mumbling that this hill was not a hill as people saw it, that it was a vast cathedral which had the aspect of a hill; that this cross was not like other crosses anywhere else, that it was the pinnacle of the temple; and that each time people carried away clay, they wrecked the walls of an invisible church.

As in the history of the world so it was in Put Aringe: the more phases of religion there were, the more divided people became. Part of the village accepted the oracle and refrained from destroying God's institution, not daring to dig any more clay from the hill. The other half thought that since they had been created in the image of God, He could have no better institution than the dwelling of His people. In accord with conscience, both sides were in favour of keeping God's house intact.

On Monday morning half the strength of the village fared forth with picks, shovels, bags, and hilarity, to the Hill of the Cross. For years clay had been taken from this pit so that each year the upper part projected more and more.

When enough clay had been loosened—as if it were so much treasure—the men put it into bags which they carried away on their backs, almost running. They then helped each other clay the roofs, accepting commands from Paul because he was kind at heart and kindest in action; because he was the strongest; and because—most admirable—he was engaged to be married in the winter. It was for Paul to show his wisdom and strength, and prove that he was worthy of the people's regard and fit to be married. He therefore undertook the hardest part of the work and dug while the others carried. All talked while they worked, about what they were happy to discuss, and the work was so easy to them that one hearing their hilarity might have thought them the only happy people in the world.

They first scattered the clay in small heaps on the roofs of the houses which were so close to each other that they looked from a distance like one building. Paul had advised them to level the clay roughly on each roof in order to know how much more was needed. And as they were doing this, a heavy thing fell on the village, on the villagers, on their hearts. Something heavy fell upon their souls. In a moment, voices, laughter, action, were all thrust into the furnace of silence to be brought out a different

shape and of a quality to be used for a different purpose. No one asked what had happened or where; everybody seemed to know, and voices from all over the village became louder and louder like thunder from silent clouds—meaningless yet elemental. Whoever could walk, whoever could run, sought that—a finger of dust, rising in wrath. How far away it seemed, the Hill of the Cross! It seemed as if the hill were running away, as if it were rising. Fear had clutched the people's knees and but few were able to climb as far as the pit; among them a woman, Sandought Morkoor. As the men were recovering from under the caved-in clay, the body of the strongest in the village, she, an Amazon, came out of the pit and deafened the ears of the fear-bound throng below: "Nana, your home is wrecked!"

No one could mistake her voice and everyone knew that Nana had but one home, a mansion; namely, Paul.

Those who worked that day, claying the roofs, felt very tired for the first time in their lives. Those who had thought their dwelling an institution of God, were defeated.

SCHOOL DAYS

In the heart of winter, we often walked to school barefoot; not all of us because of poverty, but rather as a matter of custom, and we carried with us not only our breakfast and clumsy books but kindling. The more we brought, the more were we favoured by the teacher; hence there dawned in me, the idea of stealing. No parent would allow his children to take the best of the wood to school, for wood was scarce, and often I hid some behind the door where it was dark, to slip out with—when the chores had been finished and it was time to leave for school. And almost as often, my father discovered it, saying, "I wonder who puts this wood behind the door and why," and to my disappointment would put it in the stove. The teacher sent back any child who came in without a stick or an armful of faggots. But if the child cried because his feet were frozen, the Master would sympathize with him, letting him wear his own shoes. Indeed the schoolhouse was the warmest place in the village and we liked to breakfast there better than at home, and could talk as we pleased for the teacher arrived as much as an hour after we did.

Winter was a mystic season, of a thousand happenings—joys and sorrows. Joy for all, with most of the hardship for men, most of the sorrow for children and especially for boys. The first blizzard thrust open the door of the schoolroom and what could be expected of a door which had been so stubborn as not to open to spring's fragrant winds? It was the most uninviting door a child ever entered. Had my eager ambitions lain there like chopped wood, the schoolroom would have been buried in a disorder of blocks rising to the sky. Day after day, year in and year out, it was the same so far as books and learning were concerned. Psalms and the Bible all day and every day, written in the ancient language, incomprehensible except as letters. There was always the same kind of teacher, cruel and ununderstanding. When one went away or died, there grew as it seemed out of the decayed trunk, its offspring. The only things that were changed often were the rods—new ones every Monday morning. On that day the benighted schoolhouse was almost a *morgue*. We cried until our eyes had swelled nearly to the size of our hands and feet. As docile pupils, we were not allowed on Saturdays and Sundays when there was no school, to play even a quiet game freely, but we were supposed to stop, run, or hide, when we saw the sight of the teacher or the priest. Many games, in fact those that we liked best to play, were taboo and if we were caught playing them or had been betrayed by a Judas, that was the end of all our pleasure; a forest could not supply rods enough. The teacher's power was final even if a child broke under it and took sick. A schoolboy is the slave of his elders and there were many Judases who spoiled my happiness by notifying the teacher that I had done this or had not done that. If the teacher had seen me at a forbidden game or somebody for his own selfish sake said, "I will tell the teacher," I then had nightmare on a Sunday night, my imagination tormenting itself about the scenes of Monday. Playing with unfortunate children who could not go to school because they were poor and were the sole support of their families, was unbearable, a sacrilege. "The savages, the untamed!" speaking as loud as they wanted to on the streets, swore what they pleased, did not go to church, took no sacrament. Play with them? It was a disgrace to ignore such distinctions.

On one of those restless spring days that burst prematurely out in the middle of winter, the teacher intended for some reason to

keep a boy in school at noon, the time for us to go home to our luncheon, and to tend the stock. Hatchadour uttered a loud cry, the teacher could not silence him even when he had promised not to punish him. "It means just that you will stay here," he said. "See! I am putting the rod under the mat."

"No! no!" the boy protested, "it is sunny outside, and I want to go home. I will stay in another day!"

The boy's sound reasoning made the teacher laugh and he began to twit his victim a little, which meant that he was going to free the lad. The prisoner, however, accepted no sarcasm and turned toward the open door, crying as he did so at the top of his voice. The Magistrate laughed and the child said to him what had often been said to him by this very man: "You damned useless vagabond, why don't you let me go home!" then slapped the Magistrate's face with his little hand, and made his way out. The crest-fallen monarch was mummified for a moment; dignity would not allow him to run after the boy who was now out of sight and he called to the other pupils to catch him. But as I have said, the boy had got away.

The process of our promotion and retrogression was sickening. There were no divisions of classes. The pupils sat lined along the wall, on straw mats. There were two recitations during the day—one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Yesterday's proud success often stumbled and was the next day's failure. Any one who recited his lesson better or memorized it to sing in the church, or on a special occasion in a home, was promoted in the line toward the place where the teacher had his own soft, private mat and pillow. The success of the morning could be a failure in the afternoon, tears in eyes. For what lad could recite continuously well in those two incomprehensible books? One memorized better to-day, another recited better the next day; for innumerable duties at home would not let one study regularly. So this "up to-day," "down to-morrow" went on and on. The struggle for supremacy and its consequences were just as heated and impassioned in that little schoolroom as anywhere, in any undertaking in the world.

The teacher was fair or else was beyond our standard of judgement. Most injustices originated among the higher students, "Infallibles" as we called them. When, during recitation hours the teacher wished to take a nap or to go out, he put the students—sometimes babies sent by mothers who were busy, and again, young

girls of eighteen or nineteen, or young men up to twenty-five—in the charge of one or two Infallibles. The sole aim of these higher students was, like that of the middleman anywhere, chiefly graft. I often did not eat the fruit my mother gave me or stole some to appease their wrath or to stimulate a sense of justice, for sometimes they would beat me harder than the teacher did. And they were likely to send me from the middle of the line to the bottom. They had gone to school twenty-five years because they were poor and had no fields or orchards or vineyards to work in. No wonder they had become Infallibles, having cringed so long by the side of the teacher. And the teacher of course could not beat grown people.

Once my brother caught hold of another little boy and said, pulling him back, "That's my place!"

The other lad cried, "No, it isn't; it's my place!"

The Infallible called my brother into the centre of the room and ordered him to stand on one leg, but the child could not do it, and wobbled. Each time he touched his foot to the floor, the whip struck him sharply, and he began to cry. I could not stand this; but the only thing I could do was to volunteer to take his place.

"You will?" snapped the Infallible, "then do it." I stood on one leg, crane-like, longer than he thought I could, and this irritated him. In a moment, however, someone who was trying to mimic me, attracted my attention and I lost my balance. "Aooo!" I cried and swore at him. My ankle was badly hurt, I was crying, and to make matters worse, the Infallible said, threatening me, "You swore in the schoolhouse; just wait till the teacher comes."

One Monday morning, Punishment Day—when we were whipped in accordance with our Saturday or Sunday sins, some lying on their backs to lift up the soles of their feet, some opening their hands to the rods—one of the boys proved ingenious and ingenuous, at the same time: the idea was clever, but the results proved frightful. As soon as the rod had descended on the bottom of his foot, a column of dust rose. Thinking it ordinary dust from the fellow's thick woolen socks, the teacher struck the other foot ferociously to reprimand the first foot for its impudence in blowing so much dust at him. The rod awakened an even greater column of dust, which streamed up to the Magistrate's countenance in proportion to the strength of his official action. The Master

stood up to escape the dust of these unholy feet and brought down his blows in rapid succession. In vain, however, for the dust in its reciprocity rose yet higher. Finally he stopped half choked and perspiring, made his eyes protrude as if they were in some way extensible, and looked at the face of the boy who was not, however, inconvenienced by the dust and was not crying at all. The teacher was furious and ordered one of the Infallibles to take off the lad's socks and lo, about a bushel of ashes spread itself on the floor.

The poor lad was in the end a loser, for by noon, although he had stopped crying, he could hardly walk. Poor fellow! We knew that there was no extra wool in his house, and ashes were so unreliable.

One season from far, far away, a youthful fellow came to the village with his parents, a younger brother and sister, and another sister still younger named Zarmanazan. Although his parents were from the village, he had been born in Smyrna and had not known before what our village looked like. It was said that he could do everything in the world except sing in the church. But that did not matter. The village chose him unanimously for its new teacher. He was the focus of our childish imagination and admiration: such a teacher! "He can soon learn to sing in church," the villagers agreed, "a man of such capacity can do anything." Though they found that he had a voice no better than a year-old burro, he was satisfactory inasmuch as he could impart knowledge to their children.

He was about twenty-five years old, and very clean looking. There was for us children the next season, a different air in the schoolhouse. To make a promising *début*, each of us, one by one, kissed his hand. Unfortunately this seemed to annoy him. He told us that those who wished to study French might ask their parents to order books for them from town. Study French! The thought of it was heavenly to us. We should have new text-books, the Bible and Psalms were only to be used in church! It seemed like a dream. We were to have a black-board on the wall! Now we were going to learn something.

At noon I rushed home and poured the news into my parents' ears. I could pronounce "French" better than I could "black-board," which is "writing-board" in Armenian. I had never seen one, but a French book was a French book no matter what it was. What was a "writing-board"? Even on this first day I

thought I had already learned something. My parents agreed to everything except to buying me a French book. My father shrugged his shoulders and said that I might never see a Frenchman all my life. But I cried, and did well to cry for it brought me the book. How strange I thought when at last the book was in my hand, none of the letters in it looked a bit like ours.

From this on, things were a bed of roses. There was no more beating, learning only. We studied French like so many frogs in a pond, repeating in chorus; a, u—O; e, a, u—O; a, u, x—O. And the z (zed) at the end of the alphabet—so distasteful, so flat. It sounded like *zet* which is a malodorous oil for burning in lamps.

Song is the first and last expression of the spirit; it is a child's first outlet, and an old man's last inlet. Men who are blind, who are dumb or maimed, sing, or love to hear songs. A man may have lost everything; song is the last thing to leave him. We sing not because we love, though love makes our singing; we sing not because we have anything or expect to have anything. Song is the bark or rind of the spirit. Flowers may come and vanish; fruit may ripen and fall, leaving a scar; leaves may flame and fall; but the bark is still there and when it disintegrates, hardening takes place. Is not song the lining of the body?

All types of men came to our schoolroom—alone, in groups, prompted by a decanterful of liquid, urged by love or loneliness or sorrow. "Ach, teacher, I am burning, I have sorrows," they would say. "Teacher, give command to your pupils to sing me a song. Come, boys, a song. Let me see you; louder, louder! Ach! ach!"

Song is the inevitable sequel of every emotion; people look for it and want it after joy, after sorrow, after victory; even after defeat. And although we children had no knowledge of the emotions of our listener, tears gathered on his face as if our songs were actually taking form and motion there.

Although my father never came to the schoolhouse for song, song went to his house when he felt a need for it and this was often. One day he had sent to ask the teacher to bring a group of the best singing boys to our house that evening. In a group I could sing well, for children sing better in groups; but when he asked me to sing alone, a paralysis held me. I would start, falter, and start again, but my vocal chords became choking fingers which seemed to break my voice into glassy pieces. Of course my austere

father could not tolerate so disgraceful a failure and when wine had made him agile, all those in his presence were bound to respond to his activity. His tobacco-box made a vault in the air and landed on the nape of my neck as I was retreating in disgrace. I tented behind my mother, and in stifling a cry, made the sound one makes in trying to dislodge a disturbing cat—Psust! Psust!

Presently complaints poured into the schoolroom. "Teacher," a log of a man, a great trunk of an oak would come in and say, "I am told that you do not punish my children at all. It is getting so that they do not mind even their parents. You should beat them, Teacher, you should beat them. I will have to report you to the school-board. 'Their flesh to you and their bones to me,' don't forget, Teacher, and don't be afraid. Beating is the best way to teach children; it should be thus," the villager took half a rod that was still to be found in the peaceful domain, calling to his children, "hey, you, dog-sons-of-a-dog, come here!" When the children had come to him, trembling, he gave the rod to the teacher and commanded, "Open, open your hands and let me see the teacher whip you. Now," he said turning to the Master, "let me see you whip. Show me the strength of your arm, Master."

The teacher gave them a few light strokes.

"No, no! Give them the kind we used to get. Is that what I am paying ten piastras for? That is no way to train children!"

Then our youthful Master declared himself. "Who gave you leave to instruct me?" he demanded, and the meeting ended in a raw fashion.

The poor teacher could not withstand the whole village. He took to beating, which like drink became a habit with him, and we were beaten as unmercifully as ever. We studied no longer either Psalms or newer books. The Master was a martyr and we were helpless victims.

Next to the church, the schoolhouse is the best building in the village and next to the church, has the quietest location. Late one night, an enemy of the teacher's saw smoke coming from the schoolhouse chimney. Keen to discover something, he listened at the door and heard whispering. He then summoned a companion and waited with him in a corner. Incredible! At this late hour of night the teacher came out with a woman whose name was Mary—a Mary in every place.

That year the school closed early, before spring came, for it

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was too late to appoint another teacher. And the black-board which had been so inspiring, remained on the wall with boys' initials carved all over it.

However, even in so short a period of study, a rift in the black wall of learning had disclosed itself to me: "A Frenchman named Joseph Leverrier, had discovered the existence of Neptune, thus completing our planetary system." I knew that to be learning and have not forgotten it—the only learning which I brought from my village.

To be continued

AND LOVE SAID, LET THERE BE RAIN

BY SCOFIELD THAYER

Twist me not laurel from the mountains
Nor break me heather from the plains,
For I have sat by Love's dry fountains
And now it wholly rains.

And now the downpour of disaster
In liquid drops is turned,
And headlong fast and headlong faster
My heart has wholly learned.

My heart has learned that every sorrow,
Though at the quick it dig and stay,
Shall liquefy in a to-morrow
Whereof He Pours the Day.



TORSO. BY ALEXANDER ARCHIPENKO

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TWO SWARMS

BY STOYAN CHRISTOWE

MASSES of bees adhered like huge clusters of black grapes to the entrances of the hives in the gardens at the back of the houses. Forsaking the dim interiors of their homes, they had established themselves out of doors and awaited the propitious moment for making a final departure.

It was a day such as bees choose for swarming. The sun fell warm upon the low mud-plastered houses with their red tiled roofs, upon fruit-trees and kitchen-gardens. Above the river which cut the hamlet in two, the patches of corn-field on either side, and the young girls who clumsily pounded wet clothes on the bank under the willows, the sky arched, blue and cloudless.

A cluster of bees on one of the hives in our apiary began to stir, rustling and fluttering like an army preparatory to an expedition, or a nation on the point of exodus. Slowly it dissolved into a shimmering stream that gushed from the hive as if sprayed from a spout, into quivering, animated drops that floated in the air. The swarm was prodigious—an innumerable, aerial army that blackened the air above the garden, buzzing continuously above and around the fruit-trees.

"Tick . . . tock . . . Tick . . . tock," came the monotonous, unvarying sound from two cobble-stones which my grandfather knocked between his hands as he chanted, "Perch . . . perch . . . Perch, queenie." Then suddenly, a deep faint noise, a kind of distant rumbling came from our neighbour's garden. A swarm had issued from that apiary also and like a conoidal, baseless tower, reeled, wavered, and twirled in the air, drifting gradually toward our swarm.

"Pick up stones, son, and lead it the other way!" cried my grandfather in a tremulous voice. I endeavoured to entice the swarm in the opposite direction, but as if annoyed by my crude music, it trembled above me stationary, inclining, however, more and more toward the garden above which our own bees were still spinning and warping.

Attracted by the knocking of the cobble-stones and the buzzing, our neighbour came out, wiping dough from her hands on her thick woolen apron. She also picked up stones and tried to lure the swarm, keeping time as she chanted: "Come, queenie, come, queenie. This way; come, charming." She was the best bee-breeder in the county. When "evil eyes" had enchanted a hive and dead inmates fell like autumn leaves in front of the hemper, if the priest's psalms and the sprinkling of holy water had failed to disenchant it, the owner rushed to her for counsel. Now, however, despite her skilful efforts, the black, rustling bee-cloud slowly drifted toward our swarm. Hoarse from his prolonged cantillations, my grandfather importuned the bees to settle on a cherry-sprig which had been sprayed with dissolved sugar. Unmoved by the intoning and as if it loathed the candied twig, the swarm continued to float in the air.

"They'll mingle," my grandfather quavered, "and scythe each other—to the last bee!"

Children who had come running from their play, kept at a distance. At a distance also, for fear their "eyes" should be blamed for it if the bees intermingled and fought, men and women leaned on the wicker fences in their court-yards, furtively observing the curious coincidence.

Like clouds moving together and destined to collision, the swarms gyrated forward, closed, and instantly rebounded like toy balloons—collided once more and began to fuse, transforming the atmosphere above the low cherry-trees into a viscous mass of animation—a dense network which screened the sun itself from us. With a sudden cry, a child tore madly away, palm against forehead where a bee had planted its tiny, spear-like sting.

My grandfather scratched his neck puzzled, as the two-fold titanic swarm gradually began to encircle the twig upon which there was already a nucleus. The black bee-cloud was then distilled by degrees, into dancing, living drops that rained upon the sprig like a volley of bullets. As the round mass grew bigger, the heavy, continuous noise subsided a little; the air became clearer of the innumerable specks that floated in it. It was as if some invisible atmospheric hand had compounded the bee-cloud into a bag and hung it on the cherry-branch.

Our neighbour and my grandfather hived the bees without difficulty by placing over them a rectangular wooden box; and beneath

them, a pan of dry, burning ox-manure, the fumes of which drove the bees into the box. When none was left crawling on the sprig, the wooden case was lowered and left by the tree the rest of the afternoon; for as long as the sun shone, bees spun round the branches, surveying the vicinity before finally deciding to enter their new home.

The unfortunate little bough on which the queens of the pilgrim bands had chosen to alight, lifted again, but looked withered; its leaves had a frost-bitten appearance in comparison with the other healthy twigs.

"Grandfather," I said, "Look at that little branch. How sad it is. I think it's going to dry up."

"'Tis the inside of the tree, sonny," replied my grandfather, "that keeps the branches strong. The roots and trunk are sound. It will recover its healthy look." He sighed, swinging his arms a moment. I was too young to understand.

The long day was about over. The sun had partly sunk below the horizon and a breeze was stirring as peasants, a bag over the shoulders, staggered along the road toward the village. Oxen paced homeward and the herders trailed behind—youngsters with sun-burned faces, with bare, scratched-up legs, and staffs in their hands like sceptres of authority. Night slowly enfolded the houses, trees, barns—the whole village in its shadow. Bees that had murmured hesitant about the trees through the late afternoon, reluctantly entered the empty, as yet unfamiliar home. My grandfather and our neighbour lifted the wooden case and set it in the row in our apiary to stay there until fall, when the bees would be killed and the honey divided. My grandfather said it was the only thing to do. The bees could not be separated and for either to buy the other's bees was out of the question. For as long as he could remember, no one had ever sold a beehive. "Bees are sensitive little things," he said, "and would resent being bartered."

Summer had passed. Divested of their rich, hanging clusters, the vineyards lay spread at the foot of the hills like faded reddish blankets. Peach, apricot, and other fruit-trees loomed against the sky, lonely and barren. Bees still journeyed to and fro, perched on coarse, withered autumn flowers, trooped as far as the vineyards in the hope that hidden grapes might still hang somewhere, but returned with their bags empty.

It was a night in September. Stars trembled in the clear sky.

An autumn breeze swept over the fields. The bees had retreated to the innermost chambers of the hives, where numbed by the cold, they huddled together for warmth. As my grandfather and our neighbour lifted their joint property from its place in the row, the bees stirred and shuffled like nuts in a sack. What was it? Some natural disturbance or a catastrophe that had befallen them? Before they could determine their misfortune, a kettleful of water was spilled on them, sweeping them with it as it ran through the interstices of the combs. They struggled, crawled, and rolled in the water, hopeful of life, but another cataract descended and put an end to the struggle. Our neighbour and my grandfather stooped under the weight of the honey-box as they carried it to the shed adjoining the garden. After placing it open side up on a wide smooth board, they swept away the drowned bees which lay like a black veil on the combs. When the dead and half dead bees had been brushed away and the honey gleamed there in its purity, those gathered around the box were awestruck by the novel, unanticipated arrangement of the combs. Such an astonishing network of wax had never been seen by any one, though dozens of hives had been spoiled by us in this way, for the honey. Instead of building the combs crosswise and strictly parallel, as had always been the case with any hive from which we had taken the honey, the bees had in this instance, divided the box with mathematical precision into two equal compartments, separated from each other by a thin resinous wall. Half the combs ran crosswise—that is parallel with the partition; the other half, lengthwise and at right angles to the partition. Indisputably the two families of bees had separated as soon as they had been hived and had peaceably divided the available space. Why they had chosen to mingle and to remain together when they had deserted their original homes in the first place for lack of space—risking poverty and uncertainty in the hope of finding it—even my grandfather with his practical knowledge of bee-breeding, could not divine. That they had managed to divide the space amicably and live in concord, was evident. Because the space had been small, every comb was filled with honey; there was not a dry cell. It was unnecessary, accordingly, to weigh the honey. We had merely to take the two halves into which the bees had divided it.

THE WINGED SERPENT

BY WITTER BYNNER

The eagle is of the air toward the sun,
And the rattlesnake is of the earth toward the sun;
And the mewing of the eagle is the sound of many people
 under the sun,
And the rattle of the snake is the sound of many people
 under the sun.
But nowhere are there people who can make the sound of the
 winged serpent,
Clapping the air into thunder
And shaking lightning from his scales.
This is the bird of the wonder that prevails,
The serpent of the wonder that prevails;
This is the dragon that lives in the mountains above the
 yellow people of the middle kingdom,
This is the dream that lives in the lake among the red people
 of the outer kingdom;
This is the heaver of earthquakes,
This is the dreamer of rain;
This is the earth in the air
And the air in the earth;
This is the winged terror in the hearts of men,
Because a snake can be so high in the air
And a bird can be so low in the ground,
With a hiss of water against the scaly girth
And a stir of rainbows through the feathered mane.

 Pray to him well,
 He will dart through your prayer,
 Through the very heart and centre of your prayer,
 And out of the words of your mouth
 He will scatter a mist that will reassemble in a great white
 cloud,
 And out of the cloud will come rain.
 Laugh for him well

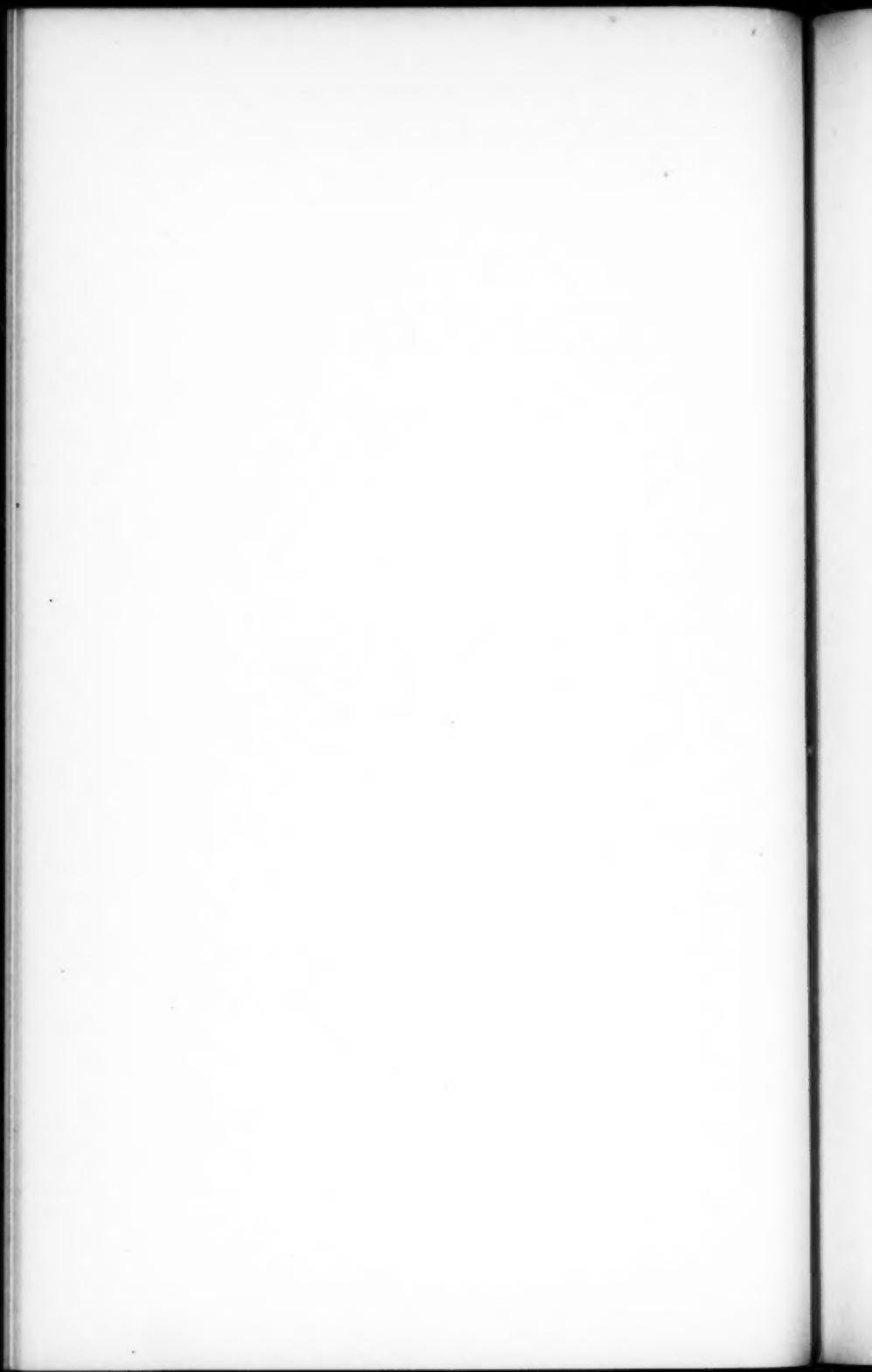
THE WINGED SERPENT

And he will dart through your laughter,
Dashing it into splinters and spars of light
To be reassembled in the sun.

Die for him,
And out of your death he will make darkness
And, if you have lived for him well,
He will add the breath, that you have sung with,
To the everlasting wind of his plumes.



A DRAWING. BY EDWARD NAGLE





A DRAWING. BY EDWARD NAGLE

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PARIS LETTER

December, 1926

ONE of the numerous recent collections devoted to the refurbishing of great authors (the past, with its death's head, needs all the paint and powder we can give it) has published a volume on Villon by Francis Carco. This brilliant writer, who made a great success in the literary stylization of Parisian "apaches," happens to be particularly well equipped to write the history of the "bad boy" poet, as they would say in the fifteenth century. These reconstructions always have on me much the effect of "*vieux Paris*" at Hollywood; yet the principal character is very much alive. This is the picturization of the sorry life of one of France's five or six authentic poets—foreigners best acquainted with our literature never go wrong in such matters—a life which is known to us principally through legal inquests, reports of tortures, and the records of imposed sentences. Vagrant, reckless, jealous of liberty,

*"Mais, là, je fuyais l'école
Comme font les mauvais enfants
En entendant cette parole
A peur que le coeur ne se fent . . ."*

Villon is reminiscent of La Fontaine, and yet more, of Verlaine. M Carco, who is himself a poet, has emphasized this sombre story by excellent quotations from Villon's poetry.

The Talleyrand of M Jacques Sindral and the Vie Amoureuse d'Henri Beyle (Stendhal) of M Abel Bonnard, are not so much biographies as character studies seen from a professional angle. For Talleyrand the important thing in life was diplomacy; for Stendhal, love. Stendhal-Beyle studied its technique like a trade, although with much more heart than a Lovelace. M Bonnard, one of our best writers, maintains the tradition of the great classical eras; he has the French feeling for nuance, and is master of a style which, though often brilliant as poetry and strongly metaphorical, has the precision of steel. He explains away the apparent contra-

dictions of Stendhal-Beyle's temperament: his sensitivity so well concealed beneath dryness and cynicism; his surprising combination of extreme lucidity and extreme blindness; all the detours and doubling of this typically modern mentality (Stendhal wrote in 1830 that he would not be understood before 1880) which could make full allowance for the demands of both perception and affection without sacrificing one to the other.

Everything about Talleyrand seemed to have been said. Nevertheless M Jacques Sindral has successfully ventured to add a new portrait to the iconography of the prince of Benevento. Sindral (who is already well known under his real name, Fâbre-Luce, as the author of several novels and two political studies, the second of which in particular, *La Victoire*, aroused much discussion in 1924) was especially qualified to study this figure, both as an expert in diplomacy and as a romantic in politics. To-day, when statesmen count, only in so far as they possess international merit and, we might say, a gold value, it was interesting to acclaim Talleyrand as a great representative of the European spirit. Traditionalist and reactionary through his aristocratic birth and refined taste, revolutionary and modernist through the vigour and audacity of his judgement and the range of his unprejudiced ambition, Talleyrand finds in M Sindral, in whom one might detect a duality of the same sort, the interpreter best fitted to understand him. The work of this young writer displays an intelligence which is rare in its scope and impartiality. With thorough objectivity, he has been keen and resourceful in undertaking the revision of the Talleyrand case, and in acquitting Talleyrand of the charge of treason. Talleyrand merely opposed the excesses of the Napoleonic chimera by a system of defences which, since they anticipated the worst, were conceived with a view to mitigating the disaster. "Is this not," says Sindral, "wholly the attitude of the governmental departments in normal times, when they assure the continuity of a national policy by a series of petty treasons against their successive administrations?" "It is well," he adds with audacity, "for a nation to have at its disposal several rings of statesmen, one trusting to fortune, another hesitant and inclined to compromise. France had need of a Thiers in 1871; she may have had need of a Caillaux in 1917." Towards the end of the book, where Talleyrand is given proper rating with respect to Napoleon and in view

of "the incommensurable differences of quality" between the two men, there are magnificent pages to show us which of these leaders claims Sindral's admiration.

In his *Le Dépaysement Oriental* M de Traz, editor of the *Revue de Genève*, takes us through Egypt and Syria. His book (like his magazine, which maintains at a very high level the impartial thinking of the forum of European culture and politics which Geneva has become) hovers equidistant between lyrical praise and denigration. M de Traz admires Islam for its past, but questions whether it has the qualities necessary for an active participation in the future. The formalism of Islam; the *magister dixit* of its genuinely scholastic methods of instruction; the character of Mussulman thought, "reproducing itself in a fashion predominantly ornamental, by the repetition of a single motif"—all this seems to him irreconcilable with progress. Furthermore the rulers of Angora seem to share the opinion of M de Traz, and they are resorting to secularization as the first step in their attempts to ensure the survival of Turkey.

If M de Traz pays tribute to Europe in a beautiful and comforting outburst of courage and hope, M André Malraux, for his part, looks toward the Orient. After his first appearance as a Super-Realist poet, this young writer went to China, where he spent two years among the revolutionary circles of Canton and of French Indo-China. Now, on his return, he gives us his first book of prose, *La Tentation de l'Occident*. Under the guise of an imaginary correspondence between a Frenchman and a Chinese (where, reviving the device of the Huron or the Persian in our eighteenth-century literature, M Malraux puts all the criticisms in the mouth of the Chinese and allows the Frenchman very weak replies) it is a lyric attempt to settle the Orient-Occident problem. One could wish that the work had been more precise: but in any event, it is a contribution to the study of the most complex and formidable of coming issues. Like all Asia, M Malraux takes the part of the many against the individual. But all art is individual, and M Malraux is an artist. Will he carry his ideas to their logical conclusion, which is suicide? . . . An eventuality which is not, perhaps, wholly repugnant to him.

I am glad to be able to call attention to the appearance in French literature of a young writer whose remarkable talent bears the most

brilliant promise. His book, *Mont Cinère*, has been very justly compared to the works of the Brontë sisters: one finds here the same reflection, the same attentiveness to the smallest details of the life of the sensibilities, the same power of creating characters which live with an incredible intensity, verity, and force of passion. This new author, M Julien Green, is an American, and in fact his book does at first give somewhat the impression of having been translated from the English. The thought is thoroughly Anglo-Saxon and the style is sometimes at fault, having preserved the contours of the author's native language (although, we are told, he was educated in France and is accustomed to think in French). M Green has since corrected these shortcomings, and there are no further reservations of the short story which he has just given the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, except perhaps that the subject pleases me less than that of *Mont Cinère* and seems to have been handled with less depth.

M Octave Homberg, one of the "leading figures" in French financial circles, has recently published *Le Financier Dans la Cité*, a book which has already attained a circulation of over fifty thousand and is making a great stir at a time when France is reaching a crucial point in its financial history. M Homberg attributes this grave situation to two causes: first, the intrusion of politicians into finance; and second, the collapse of the two principal mainstays in the plans for France's financial rehabilitation after the war—Germany's failure to pay, and the failure to ratify the convention which would permit France to reduce her military budget. The French treasury, as is well known, has been the subject of lively disapproval in the United States and England, where it is generally said that the French tax-payer is paying no taxes. I do not believe that I have ever heard in reply to this accusation the statement that the French tax-payer has paid the heaviest of all taxes, a tax which deprived him of seven-eighths of his wealth by the drop in the franc, the devaluation of his government holdings, treasury bonds, railway securities, et cetera, and finally the absence of assets on the part of his Russian, Turkish, and German creditors, because by a supreme violation of both justice and prudence it is the French tax-payer who has paid without guaranty the hundred billions required for the reconstruction of the devastated areas. On its part, the French press demonstrates how the French are the most heavily taxed people in the world. As always, each faction is partially in the right. M Homberg explains that

the French treasury system, thanks to the competitive bidding at elections, admits of such tax reductions at the base, that the workers and the peasants no longer pay anything, while the rest of the citizens of France, a minority, pay all. In 1924 the tax on agricultural profits in France yielded forty-six million francs, the tax on industrial and commercial profits a billion francs! The numerous politicians who represent the farm population in parliament are waiting till the Greek calends before making a new assessment of land values, although this is indispensable, since the present figures date back to the period before the war. On the other hand, the corporations ("money powers" as they are called by the politicians, who make as much of this imaginary danger as they once did of the "clerical peril") are burdened with enormous taxes. The Left Wing, by its vexatious fiscal tactics, has succeeded only in frightening French capital into investment abroad. It is necessary, M Homberg remarks very justly, that the Left Wing cease considering taxes as a punishment inflicted upon the well-to-do classes. This demagogic and thoroughly Latin conception is shamelessly maintained by the party theorists, such as M Jèze, who writes: "The problem of taxes is essentially a political problem." After a revision of the treasury system on the basis of equitable principles which will assure a much better return, M Homberg like all right-minded persons sees no other way of arriving at the restoration of our finances than by stabilizing the franc. As for inter-allied debts, M Homberg denounces them as a great injustice. "The French," he says, "at this moment are paying for munitions which laid France waste at a time when she was serving as a shield for allies better protected by nature." "One could," he also says, "make the plea of constraint valid in law for every acknowledgement of debt obtained by force; and with the Germans at Noyon, was not that a case of the dagger at the throat? But at least, let France's allies not treat her more severely than Germany; let them recognize that she, as well as her aggressor, is entitled to some arrangement whereby the yearly debt payments would be automatically suspended at the first symptom of a drop in the exchange." Finally, we should mention the fact that M Homberg, one of the Frenchmen best acquainted with his country's assets, estimates that at the present rate of forty francs to the dollar the franc is far below its real value.

In my last letter I was only able to mention in passing the book

of M G. Gabory on Marcel Proust. Less methodical perhaps than the work by M L. P. Quint, it is more imaginative, more intelligently intuitive. It is a charming piece of gossip, somewhat informal, in which the author of *Swann and Guermantes* is very exactly rendered, with his style, his language, and his profound thinking. On the subject of Proust, a controversy has arisen recently in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* between M L. de Robert, a friend of Proust as a young man, and the critic M B. Crémieux. The former maintains that Proust wrote his novels without a plan, "like a long letter"; and the latter, with arguments which seem to us irrefutable, asserts in agreement with avowals of Proust himself, that the author, for all that he composed in accord with a new and very personal formula—around a centre, and as Gide has happily expressed it "*en rosace*,"—did have a guide-line to follow. If I may make a personal contribution to this debate (and the issue is not without importance, since it goes far to absolve Proust of one of the accusations which has most often been laid against him) I should say that Proust when referring to the last books in his great symphony, *La Prisonnière* and *Le Temps Retrouvé*, often said to me that these books should serve to clear up certain attitudes of the author and aspects of some of the characters which might have remained obscure to that point. "Wait for the end," he said; "the spread of the compass is very great; this prevents one as yet, from judging the whole; but never fear: that has all been traced out in advance."

PAUL MORAND

BOOK REVIEWS

A YELLOW PERIL

RIEN QUE LA TERRE. *Par Paul Morand. 12mo.*
255 pages. *Bernard Grasset, Paris. 15 francs.*

IT is the devil and the devil only that takes people to the tops of high mountains, said "B.V." Thompson. The same subtle influence, apparently, draws people to the tropics. Llewelyn Powys in equatorial Africa and Paul Morand in Siam came to the same conclusion. "To look for a meaning, a purpose in life, out here in Africa, appears as foolish as to look for the meaning in the creation and death of an extinct ichthyosauria whose meaningless existence has already reached its appointed end." That is Mr Powys. This is M Morand: "The Tropics are themselves a silent and permanent cataclysm and one might say, a punishment for man, were it possible for an instant to be a question of man in this *épopée végétale*. Here corruption is life and life ends in finishing to be born. . . . Halted by the impossibility of these tepid, smoking woods, one perceives fruits that have the air of tumours, maladies that have the air of animals, and corpses which, a half-hour after their death, have become flowers." Strange *milieux*, are they not, for a Cambridge man and a Parisian to suddenly find themselves in? They returned enriched by experience and with stories to tell, but punished, as traffickers with strange gods are apt to be, with new fears. Since Africa Llewelyn Powys has written an essay entitled, *In Defense of Cowardice*, and M Morand returns from his tour of the world livid with a sense of what we used to call "The Yellow Peril."

In circling the globe M Morand stopped longer in Siam than in any other country, studied it more closely, and gave it the bulk of the book he devotes to his travels. It is obvious, although it is not avowed, that Siam was an "objective." He rushed to get there. Accustomed as Americans are to speed and the idea of speed it

dazzles a good New Yorker to see a world-traveller devoting but twenty minutes to his home town. Perhaps it was less. A lucky taxi sometimes makes the distance from the dock to the Grand Central Station very quickly. At any rate it takes about seven lines in the book. Chicago the same, Niagara Falls even less. It is breath-taking the speed of a Frenchman once he gets started. In Vancouver there is a pause long enough to vignette a portrait of the place. In Japan there are more vignettes, charming, skilful, and already appreciably in the manner of Hokusai, but with still a sense of hurry in the background. It took old China to stay M Morand in his mad pace. In Pekin, after a dinner on the roof of the Grand Hotel, looking out over the dimly lighted, strange city, our traveller, musing over what he has seen, writes:

"So long as the Chinese population does not increase to excess it will always prefer this soil to another; no military ambition, no political crusade can ferment it. It will be necessary, before the reservoir overflows and the yellow waters descend once more from the roof of the globe, to imagine a China without wars, without epidemics, without cataclysms. Then these four hundred million men will become a milliard and the world will be a yellow world. The example of Japan and her fantastic increase—more than a million births a year—since she has been converted to hygiene and science, do not permit it to be doubted. To-day it's not a question of whether Japan loves or does not love America, Australia. The query is—who will Japan kill in bursting?"

The peaceful Americas that lie east of The Rockies are entirely engrossed in the new game of being rich and will not catch fire at this flame, but it can be imagined that harassed France will now add The Yellow Peril to her other terrors, especially since M Morand makes it plain that Europe is not protected, as we are, by a difficult ocean, and that the Bolsheviks are extremely busy and fiendishly clever along the Yang-Tse-Kiang.

In Siam, happily, there are no politics worth speaking of. "On ne peut qu'aimer ce pays, isolé, intact, petit mais dernier échantillon des monarchies asiatiques absolues, cette terre de bonheur assoupi et de foi vive," he begins, and it is clear he intends a full-length portrait. But the fine edge of his enthusiasm dulls a trifle

before he completes his circle of the country and he finally leaves less secure of his Siam than when he found it. It may have been simply the disabling climate, but more probably it was the disintegrating effect of the cinema upon Siamese aesthetics. M Morand, one of the finest of French intelligences, judges, rightly enough, life by art. He must have been captivated by the luxurious fantasy of the *Douanier Rousseau*'s tropical landscapes, yet when he reached the tropics he found to his dismay, what Rousseau knew before him, that the monkeys of the jungle keep to their original state and that only those that escaped to the lenient climates of the north took on civilization. He must have been influenced by the tradition that still lingers in France of the marvellous Cambodian dancers who so took Rodin's fancy, yet once in Siam, he discovers that the perfection of the ancient technique is not only in imminent danger but practically doomed. It's the modern tempo beating down in this far-away retreat, the classic rhythms. The best families no longer send their talented daughters to Court to be submitted to the necessarily stern disciplines. One by one the companies of dancers disappear. By way of entertainment the young Siamese frankly prefer Douglas Fairbanks. It is even possible to suspect that M Morand himself found the Siamese theatre a bit trying. "By way of giving an idea of the monotony of the spectacle I may say that it took four hours to develop the theme of love. At a given moment, the prince, seated by the side of his lady-love, attempts to put his arms around her. She evades him with a gesture, exquisite, very slow and very chaste. But this gesture was repeated eighty-three times! Each movement is, in fact, a ritual and corresponds exactly to a theme."

Once away from Bangkok the demon of haste again became the captain of M Morand's soul. Never were boats so maddeningly slow and never was a Parisian so impatient to return to his mornings amid his books and his afternoons in the studios of Juan Gris and Georges Braque. Yet the record closes upon a mournful note. When Portcros, the first lighthouse of France is sighted, there is nothing of the frenzy of Americans catching a first glimpse of their New York.

"It's the country conquered with difficulty, the new homeland of a thousand resources, of a clear future, beautiful children, force,

easy money, hope. Hats fly into the air, the orchestra rages, the old dance like mad. All crowd together, ask questions. . . . Here, this night of November, on this sad, unheated boat, return fatigued and shivering colonials, carelessly perfumed prostitutes, badly paid and irritated functionaries, uneasy heads of families enemies of risk, people who have seen their fortunes cut in half since they have quitted France; they are quiet, turning their backs. After a month of sea-going, with quick friendships and too much conversation, all cordially detest each other."

But "touring the world is not a French exercise," M Morand confesses, and doubtless, it was a matter of conscience with him to discourage his countrymen with the sport.

HENRY McBRIDE

VIRGIN SPAIN

VIRGIN SPAIN. Scenes from the Spiritual Drama of a Great People. By *Waldo Frank*. 8vo. 301 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$3.

I WOULD rather not say what I think about this book; I would much rather not obtrude my opinion. If I did, the editor might reprove me, and perhaps I should never be allowed to review a book for *THE DIAL* again. For this reason, I will restrain myself, and the only opinion I will offer is that Mr Waldo Frank evidently enjoys travelling; we read enjoyment in every page; he leaves nothing unseen; he looks into everything. But we must not be selfish even in our pleasures. And I think it would have been kinder if Mr Frank had left Spain a virgin.

Let us look at a specimen of Mr Frank's style at its best and almost at its worst, welded into one paragraph:

"Here is a better model for Adam and Eve than the pretty Italians, the mystic lovely Byzantines; this rudimentary pair, the man decking his stone simplicity in a clownish gape of drawers and breeches, and the woman, earth-mooded, earth-whole, chording her man and bearing him along."

Womanhood always sets Mr Frank off in this strain. . . . Why does the recognized fact that the world is peopled by two different sexes, or the slightest mention of the earth, drive Mr Frank down into such abysses? Surely it is not necessary. A little discipline is good for the soul, and if Mr Frank would practise being ordinary for a time and would stop being such a He-man, I am sure we should all be much happier, and we should find in his books, instead of the vulgarities which deform every page, phrases and sentences as admirable as these: "Children not yet dead weave through the intricate clamor. . . ." "His world" (the Castilian peasant's) "is a coarse world. Winter is a blast and summer is a blast; the short spring covers his field with mud more than with flowers." Or again, "These villages would fit well into heaven." What a disappointment it is, after these, when we are met with

such horrors as the following sentences: "In the gutters which are clean, play children, warm like their mothers, *lyric like the lilacs*" (the italics are mine) or "The sheep are solid masses of tempestuous wool; each sheep is a writhe about four feet, about stalks of sinewed bone jerking it on." Or this sentence, describing a woman dancing, in the chapter called Hinterland in Africa (you will pardon my frankness). "The male music works . . . a stomach wrench, violent as childbirth, shatters upon the mellifluous woman's body." Sentences like these abound, alternating with whole paragraphs of a vulgarity such as this:

"Young Isabel, sister of the king, sits in her castle tower at Medina, and looks beyond Castille: looks south to the Moorish realm, Granada; looks east and north to the kingdoms of Aragon and Navarre; looks west to Portugal. 'Let there be Spain,' says Isabel of Castille."

In fact, if I may be frank for a moment, the book contains terrible passages of vulgarity and affectation. I see that the publisher, on the jacket of the book, announces that "Not often in literary history does a sympathetic and competent critic rise to interpret and estimate an author of genius while that author is still fighting his battle for acceptance." Well, here is another competent critic come to do it too. "Author of genius, battle for acceptance," indeed! It is about time that the truth was told about this kind of thing. Critics for the most part, while they are eager to stop real progress and the development of literature, are afraid to tell the truth when they are brought face to face with anything as noisy as this book, for fear "there should be something in it." Any one who foams at the mouth may be gifted with prophecy. They need not be afraid in this case. Mr Frank is not a writer of genius. He has, however, talent and is interested in things, and if he would stop thinking about genius, and would try to exercise restraint and develop his talent, he would give us writing as admirable as the chapter from *The Will of Saint and Sinner*. In this chapter he discards all his faults and develops all his virtues.

"Against the hostility which her sex aroused, against the distrust of the Inquisition, Teresa moves through Spain, cleansing and creating hearths for the luminous life. The world, to her, is a

household. The Master is Christ and he requires service. Her imaginative powers . . . in which the Arab glamour is not wanting . . . make so vivid the delights of service that the convents of Spain become as magnets, sapping the humbler households of the land. To Teresa, the soul also is a home; and her book 'Las Moradas' is a picture of its chambers. 'As above, as below.' Christ, the bridegroom, enters the household of the soul: and at once, the household becomes Heaven. Teresa's convents are literal heavens upon earth; they are the dwellings of a Lord whose passion fails not. Spain's will pours a sea of energy into this fragment of her deed. Teresa's work is homely; and so is the rough plastic language of her books. . . ."

This is beautiful and true. It is a great pity that Mr Frank is not content to restrain himself and give us writing like this more often. He would deepen and widen his talent and develop his powers, which are real. His admirers are doing this writer the worst disservice in bolstering him up to works of noisy bombast. No amount of shouting will bring fire down from heaven; but a beautiful household fire is within the reach of this writer of talent, if he cares to work for it. How true, for instance, is this:

"The process of art is the endowment of a particular experience with the full measure of life. . . . The work of art is a fragment of word or substance informed with the wholeness of spiritual vision."

SACHEVERELL SITWELL

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

ALL SUMMER IN A DAY, An Autobiographical Fantasy. By Sacheverell Sitwell. 8vo. 287 pages. Duckworth, London, 16s. George H. Doran Company, New York, \$3.50.

IN speaking of the art of literary portraiture, "If the drawing be undertaken," says Mr Saintsbury, "let it be faithful." Memoirs, subjective and objective, seem to have usurped the place of the "mere" novel. Indeed, one perhaps unconsciously extends a reprieve to the form of certain stories and novels because one has encountered in them the author's inviolate living—a personal essence superior to chapter-headings and machinery.

Of autobiography, we are familiar with several varieties. There is the *devoir* so to speak, conceived by a writer out of respect for his past and in solicitude for the rights of posterity. There is also, what might be called the personal cyclorama—a thing of expletives, italics, and untriumphant puns. *I Have This to Say* by Violet Hunt¹ is a book of this kind—a book which, despite many an unsayable saying, moves one. Its mentality has regard for the mentality of others and is not impatient of those "who have not novels to write, but gain their living in a less nervous way." Much that purports to be much, has dwindled it seems in the printing; and as a mere matter of literary style one cannot but be aware that an enquiry is sometimes more conclusive than dogmatic pronouncement, but even in the suspect realm of the-*hero*-by-an-eye-witness there are particulars in this book, which in all asceticism and gossipless renunciation, we should have. Certain photographs, "My Niece," and Henry James by Miss Boughton, are talismanic and one recognizes as essential the verbal portrait of Henry James holding between his open palms, "my last new Persian kitten . . . which was too polite and too squeezed between the upper and the nether millstones of the great man's hands, to remind him of its existence."

¹ *I Have This to Say: The Story of My Flurried Years.* By Violet Hunt. 8vo. 306 pages. Boni & Liveright. \$3.50.

There is a kind of reminiscence, may we add, which is religious, rapt, a thing inner and final—such writing as has been given us by The Venerable Bede, by W. B. Yeats, by Henry James, and by less conspicuous exemplars of what is burnished and priestly.

In the personal record which is somewhat remote, so also in that which is informal, one may have a devout "interiority." One is aware of it in Mr Sacheverell Sitwell's Autobiographic Fantasia, *All Summer in a Day*. A wealth of unhackneyed metaphor, to be sure, has the effect occasionally, of being not quite serviceable to imagination; and as the rapid enlargement of face or other object in a motion picture may seem to one too large, Part Two seems "large." Habits of indocility furthermore, may permit some readers to reverse the author's characterization and find in the half of the book which tells of childhood—"a low and sad half"—"some ground for optimism," and in the half of the book which tells of "the winter walk"—"equivalent to spending one's afternoon in a cistern"—and of an Italian theatre's "groves and pavilions of comedy"—a slight sadness in sophistication. But the likeness in both to the way we live now, is faithful. (When Anthony Trollope told us of *The Way We Live Now*, that way of course was different.) In "the world of things one's eyes could see," there was as Mr Sitwell saw it before he "had grown tall enough to fit his coffin," much that we ourselves, now coffin size, corroborate: the grass, "like the schoolboy's pocket-knife which will never shut properly from ill-usage . . . bent back and trampled upon"; "a long brick wall, white-washed in a nautical manner"; the music of Chopin which "has such an immediate and overwhelming effect when one is young and first hears it"; and Dürer's water-colours—"the bunch of violets, the rose-tree, the rabbit, the jay's feather, the cornfield." Mr Sitwell's human things, Colonel Fantock and Miss Morgan, are truer even perhaps than his inanimate ones. And a certain sail-boat is, as made to behave in these pages, "sempiternally" marine.

When, as in the Italy of this Fantasia, Mr Sitwell "distorts the present, so as to make it full of anecdote and mythology like the past," it pleases us less than when he had tea with the Polish musicians, "at a round table, which was hidden like a baby in long white clothes," in a house "with seven great windows coming right down to the floor, and two more of them at the end of the room."

Less curiously and baroquely apical than Italy, these times enchant us when he was "too young to realize that we are in a condition of absolute liberty, except in so far as we may punish ourselves by too much greed or curiosity." But the "ghosts," early and later, of this his "private mythology" recalled in accordance with "oral and visual memory," are properly poetic and fantastic and one cannot but identify them. What could be more undeniable than the appearance when travelling, of the "interior scene . . . outside the window as though it was travelling along beside the train," "my five fellow-passengers counterfeited on the left-hand side instead of the right, so that while it was true that they now surrounded me, I was none the less able to keep a watch on them which they could not inflict on me, for they were too far away to catch any distinct reflection of the carriage." Mr Sitwell's oral memory is not a ragged one, as we know from what he has to say of music in the theatre where "everything glided continuously into the next thing," and of music in the hotel: "No one stared and there was a noisy peace." And it is a pardonable phonetic mimicry that preserves to us the French *châteaux* which Miss Morgan "always attributed to the reign of 'Angry Cat,' giving by these words to the debonair and vulgar Henri Quatre a kind of fantastic alertness and sharpness of whisker that was not out of keeping with the dandyism and self-assertion of those buildings."

If one seems to be assenting to this "caparison of ghosts . . . which all came from their tombs at the band's harsh breath" as to something in which everyone has participated, is the compliment less than it would be were one speaking of life? In having said that Mr Sitwell faithfully describes our analytic habit of subjecting experience to a poetically scrutinizing modern consciousness, we have not said how much we like his portrait or how friendly we are to certain of his sentiments as he "sat in safety behind that bed of sunflowers," particularizing "those sentiments because of their florid openness and their gilt and rayed ornament to so large and simple a centre."

PETER MORRIS

A PROPHET GOES ABROAD

LIFE AND LETTERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. By Francis W. Hirst. 8vo. 588 pages. The Macmillan Company. \$6.

MR HIRST has written a life which will be a pleasure for Jeffersonians to read—perhaps just too much a pleasure. In this work, undertaken at the suggestion of his friend and mentor, John Morley, he has presented in smooth and mellow style and easy good nature a complete and capable account of the thought and action of the most singular of all those sturdy persons who, in spite of conflicting opinions and rabid animosities, muddled through with the making of the American nation. The abiding danger of biography, as distinguished from general history is, of course, just this: one hero in one book is more than apt to be placed in a false position of predominance; the saving graces of the Union are all Hamilton's or all Jefferson's—as the case may be. Readers have only to wonder why other actors were necessary to a given scene, to realize that the emphasis is a trifle too insistent. Yet Mr Hirst's enthusiasm is pardonable for the obvious reason that history, as a rule, has given Thomas Jefferson a "bad press": vocal Yankees, for whom the making of books has literally no end, solemn persons who buy in on scholarship, have between them sadly dimmed the memory of his glory.

Someone has observed that Saint Louis contributed such a wealth of character to the reputation of the House of Capet that the French monarchy was saved in royal descent for over seven hundred years. In the same sense America has had occasion to draw heavily on the capital of Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln. Just how long these funds will hold out is not, for the moment, in question. But of these three men Jefferson affords the most striking instance of the rare combination of personal distinction with public achievement. Like Franklin, without the presidency, he would have been famous; indeed, his eight years in the office have cost him slander rather than absurd praise; he owes little of his reputation to the accidents of successful war. If Washington made

the Union and Lincoln preserved it intact, Jefferson saved it in its early days from foes persuasively more subtle than George III or Davis and Lee. He it was who stemmed the tide of reaction from the Declaration of Independence, established the Virginia dynasty in the White House, and made way for the freedom of Jackson and the frontier.

Although brilliant legalists like Mr Choate are never weary of repeating their jibes at the "sophomoric age of American political theory," the mass of less fortunate citizens has frequently found the reckless optimism of Jefferson distinctly to its taste. In our own days opportunity for preference in these important matters is, to all intents and purposes, removed; one hundred years ago the public seems to have held on to the uncanny certainty that Hamilton, at best, could only have Napoleonized our Revolution. Mr Hirst makes this realization so significant that his book, one of the minor duties of which was to celebrate the centenary of Jefferson's death, leads one to feel that his hero must have been dead rather longer than is commonly supposed. So much water has gone under the bridge that bids for a new one are not out of order.

Mr Hirst is not confused, apparently, with the cross currents of American politics, so unreasonably mysterious to the average European. In the language of the arts, he keeps his eye on the object: the basis of the Revolution was English: the obstinate though inconvenient insistence on self-government. Just here is the supreme importance of Jefferson: he was not afraid to practise at home what he proclaimed abroad, and freedom was a bitter pill after 1783. People who fight for their liberty are closely akin to people who work for a living: they enjoy seeing others do likewise. Jefferson saved the American colonies from the ironical ridicule earned by nations like Hungary, or Italy.

Among Britishers, Mr Hirst assures us, there was an immediate need for this book, Hamiltonians having had, up to date, the advantage of space and sound. The easy assurance that "your people is a great beast" is especially prevalent and popular, when the "great beast" is a beast of burden. There is a peculiar fitness in the growth of Jefferson's fame in England, for thence he drew the main inspiration of his political theory, according to the indications in such volumes of his library as survive. Contrary to common opinion, Mr Hirst maintains, Englishmen like Locke, Sydney,

and Harrington, rather than Rousseau, were the guiding influences on his thought.

Apart from the general royalist reaction, which his rise to power definitely checked, if we are to believe Henry Clay, Jefferson saw three perils for republican government so clearly as to be inconvenient for the peace of mind of his generation. The national debt, standing armies, and slavery were the nightmares of his life, and history has justified his dreams. The weight of his sagacity and prestige checked all three during the quarter of a century he was either in power or in consultation on questions of state. In matters of policy his opinion was significant: his correspondence shows that the Monroe Doctrine, for instance, was submitted to him before it was proclaimed. Incidentally, all persons who believe vaguely that Jefferson's financial theories were unsound and his purchase of Louisiana inconsistent, had better consult Mr Hirst before they close their minds to conviction.

His problem contained a double difficulty: to do the right thing, and to do it the right way. The question of end was solved with his victory in 1800, but the question of means remained. For him the answer was a matter of constant readjustment: "This country should always belong to the living generation and not to the one that is gone." At times it seems as if his warning had fallen on deaf ears—or had asked too much of the indolence and prosperity of the people he served. Certain it is that the conflicts and sorrows of a whole century have sprung from our good-natured neglect of his foresight. Because we have buried the prophet to ease our conscience, it is well that men should dig him up and make him live and speak again. For his part in this office Mr Hirst has earned good praise.

STEWART MITCHELL

BRIEFER MENTION

THE TWO SISTERS, by H. E. Bates (12mo, 320 pages; Viking Press: \$2) might be said to belong with the adumbrative schools of fiction, which seek to convey a maximum of impression with a minimum of narrative statement. It does not describe the temperamental life of persons, but suggests it; and does not suggest it as it might appear to the casual passer-by in the hours of nine to noon of everyday, but as it clamours to its owner and victim in his vigils before dawn. This tale of odd sisters and brothers, and a father odd to the point of lunacy, is certainly compact of strangeness, but by virtue of the art of saying things without saying them, it makes apparent the fact that the strangeness pictured is the strangeness of daily humanity.

CREWE TRAIN, by Rose Macaulay (12mo, 319 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2) is another gay demonstration of satirical fencing in the now familiar Macaulay manner. There is one point about this planet, she says, which should be remembered—"into every penetrable corner of it, and into most of the impenetrable corners, the English will penetrate." And nothing delights her more than to be at their heels—a sharp observer of what they do, and a witty reporter of what they say.

On the plane of fact THE FOOL IN CHRIST, by Gerhart Hauptmann, translated by Thomas Seltzer, with a preface by Ernest Boyd (10mo, 474 pages; Viking Press: \$2.50) is a careful psychological history of the Messianic delusion of Emanuel Quint, "a carpenter's son of the Eulen mountains," and of the religious mania that developed among his following of Silesian peasants; here appear Hauptmann's modern, much studied, and great intuitive acquirements in the knowledge of human nature. On the plane of analogy, where his alchemic magnificence of poetry and sympathy is most manifest, the tale describes the reappearance, in modern Prussia, of the first Christian, and shows with scrupulous rich realism the aptness to modern scenes and modern natures, of that commentary on the world and the spirit which was uttered first in Galilee. The lives of the carpenter's son of Nazareth and the carpenter's son of the Eulen mountains are not precisely similar in letter, but they are identical in purport; and in this the story advances into the fields of allegory, where it parables, with Hauptmann's globed and thorough art, the fate in this world of every truly committed seeker after the spirit.

TAMPICO, by Joseph Hergesheimer (12mo, 328 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) is elaborate, deliberate, and sultry—a first-rate example of Mr Hergesheimer's masticating manner. The author's settings, his heroines, and his style grow increasingly tropical; his tiger-like plots prowl in impenetrable prose. Tampico is large in design, ambitious in scope, and has moments of real power, but seldom shakes itself loose to run with the freedom that its subject demands.

MY MORTAL ENEMY, by Willa Cather (8vo, 122 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) is a character study of such severity that even its rightful emotional quality has been denied it; it is presented with a creative tautness which robs it of warmth. The story is set down with unquestioned economy and skill; it has touches of swift discernment, but it would be a better work of art if the mind could fasten upon an occasional moment of relaxation in its unfolding. Although a work of imagination, it has the surface of glazed pottery.

THE NINTH WAVE, by Carl Van Doren (12mo, 226 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2) seems to have been composed with a shade too much precision and detachment; Mr Van Doren gives the impression of having watched the approach of his ninth wave from the shore. The reader is never brought close enough to the theme to feel anything but the spray. Perhaps the episodic form in which he has cast the story is somewhat to blame, but the total effect is so orderly and so unruffled that one feels—on laying the book aside—as if one had completed a problem in literary geometry.

EAST OF MANSION HOUSE, by Thomas Burke (12mo, 270 pages; Doran: \$2) offers an excellent course in the writing of salable fiction. All of Mr Burke's stories are very deft, very neat, and nicely calculated to "sell" on the strength of the curiosity aroused in the opening paragraphs. In *East of Mansion House*, as in *Limehouse Nights*, Mr Burke again goes slumming with rose-coloured spectacles. Where love and death are so easy and so romantic, it is pleasant to escape from the sordid details of ordinary living to the paradise of London's slums.

RETURN TO BONDAGE, by Barbara Blackburn (12mo, 333 pages; Lincoln MacVeagh, Dial Press: \$2) surveys the revolt of the restless new generation from the middle distance of impartiality—a vantage ground in one sense but not in another, for while it means a better perspective it involves a sacrifice of immediacy. The author is like a motion picture director supervising the "long shot" of a battle scene; the camera effect is the test of realism. That the effect is achieved is to her credit, but one is now and then conscious that the preliminaries had to be managed strictly for that purpose.

THE SUN ALSO RISES, by Ernest Hemingway (12mo, 259 pages; Scribner: \$2). If to report correctly and endlessly the vapid talk and indolent thinking of Montparnasse café idlers is to write a novel, Mr Hemingway has written a novel. His characters are as shallow as the saucers in which they stack their daily emotions, and instead of interpreting his material—or even challenging it—he has been content merely to make a carbon copy of a not particularly significant surface of life in Paris. "Mike was a bad drunk. Brett was a good drunk. Bill was a good drunk. Cohn was never drunk." "I knew I was quite drunk." "It's funny what a wonderful gentility you get in the bar of a big hotel." There are acres of this, until the novel—aside from a few sprints of humour and now and then a "spill" of incident—begins to assume the rhythm, the monotony, and the absence of colour which one associates with a six-day bicycle race.

The chief trait of the thirteen verse narratives contained in *EAST WIND*, by Amy Lowell (16mo, 240 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$2.25) appears to be less poetic originality than strenuously accomplished execution. In reading these short stories—for in essence they are short stories—made from the harsh lore of farm and village character in New England, one thinks of Robert Frost, and Edwin A. Robinson, and even Edgar Lee Masters; but they have not been imitated; their fields, rather, have been invaded, invaded by a considerable eclectic energy, well versed in how to reorganize to its own purposes whatever be found suitable, wherever it be found.

The more than five hundred pieces of verse contained in *EMBERS, HYMNS AND OTHER VERSE*, by Melancthon Woolsey Stryker (8vo, 388 pages; Ernest Dressel North: \$6.50) are characterized by generosity of sentiment, by a certain command of poetic terms, and by a certain readiness of prosody; but they do not carry any great weight of poetic conviction. Their facility of feeling fails to suggest creative travail of any ultimate sort, such as works not merely in words but in universal memories, and makes memorable lines.

BEFORE THE BOMBARDMENT, by Osbert Sitwell (12mo, 344 pages; Doran: \$2.50). Mr Sitwell writes with the elegant quill of a connoisseur of manners rather than with the stub-pen of a student of life; he is more intent upon the arrangement of his characters than upon their reactions. His mood is charmingly detached and a trifle condescending, and it harmonizes very well with his detailed picture of what he terms the Golden Age of Comfort—an Edwardian era of carpets woven so thickly as to entrap the feet, when "a frothy sea of lace was receding for the first time in sixty years from the wanton legs of chair and table." Mr Sitwell portions out his story most precisely, keeping the best of it for himself.

SHERWOOD ANDERSON'S NOTEBOOK (10mo, 230 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2.50). Mr Anderson issued this autobiography in 1924, and this fall his publishers announce from his pen "the story of a mid-American childhood," which will—if one may hazard a guess—be of similar character. In between, he has collected a miscellany of essays and fragments, some published and some unpublished, and called it his Notebook. From all of which one cannot quite avoid the suspicion that Mr Anderson is somewhat precipitately making himself fabulous. "When I travel about," he writes, ". . . I am a cotton planter, a fireman from Cleveland, Ohio, taking a vacation, a horse owner, a gambler." Because "business men, workers, and others not directly concerned with the arts think of all practicing artists as a race apart." And "to know such men at all your vocation must be concealed." Why is the gulf between a bank-teller and a story-teller so deep? And are stone-masons really more communicative to gamblers than to novelists? Artists are no more a "race apart" than gamblers are—except in their own minds; and even if it were true, wouldn't it be better to capture another man's confidence as an alien instead of trying to sail past his barriers under false colours?

A MILLION AND ONE NIGHTS, The History of the Motion Picture, by Terry Ramsaye (2 vols., 8vo, 868 pages; Simon and Schuster: \$10) is a history of the development of the motion picture set forth in a lavish scale appropriate to the "industry" with which it deals. The books are comprehensive in content, profuse in illustration, detailed in documentation, and weigh a fraction of a ton. Naturally, the emphasis is chiefly on patents, trade wars, production costs, and picture finance; the film in relation to art and national psychology gets scant attention, nor is the influence of German technical skill and direction adequately presented. These subjects are more or less excluded from the author's main purpose, however, which has been to compile an historical record, filled with facts and figures, a valuable reference work for the promoter and the press agent, and a fascinating album for the layman.

THE BOOK OF MARRIAGE, arranged and edited by Count Hermann Keyserling (8vo, 511 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$5) while it does not say the last word on an inexhaustible subject, assuredly says some of the weightiest. Novelists, mystics, scientists, philosophers, and psychoanalysts have all had a finger on the pulse of the venerable institution, and although they differ in diagnosis, their prediction is predominantly hopeful. With all but three of the two dozen papers translated from the German, the discussion has a tendency to wrap itself in the mists of Teutonic idealism; one wishes that at least one specialist with the Latin temperament had been called in. However, there is Havelock Ellis to restore the balance. It was a large undertaking, and Count Keyserling has consummated it with catholic scholarship.

THE HUMAN HIVE: Its Life and Law, by A. H. Mackmurdo (8vo, 309 pages; Watts & Co.: 7/6). If the human race were docile as sheep, as intelligent as the fox, and as self-sacrificing as the pelican "in her piety," Mr Mackmurdo's programme for society might have some chance of attaining reality. To this undoubting author civilization is but a hive in which every form of activity is gradually undergoing some beneficent change. Alas, how often have we not been told that the family is a unit, society an organism, and the state a kind of sacred entity to which the personal wishes of the individual must be wholly subordinated? Within the boundaries of his theory Mr Mackmurdo is logical, but when was logic ever anything but the handmaiden of desire?

THE NEW STANDARD BIBLE DICTIONARY, edited by Melanchthon W. Jacobus, Edward E. Nourse, and Andrew C. Zenos (illus., 8vo, 989 pages; Funk and Wagnalls: \$7.50). Based upon the American Standard text of the Bible, in marked contrast with, yet not contradicting early literalism, courageously definite in its exposition of disputed questions, The New Standard Bible Dictionary will be found by scholar and amateur alike, a usefully concise, unprejudiced, and authoritative work. In alphabetical order and correlated with that which is Biblical, moreover, *Disease and Medicine, Exploration and Excavation*, and other extended articles upon subjects of outside interest, have been included in the volume.

THE THEATRE

LYRICAL telegrams from Edna St Vincent Millay, letters to the papers from the author of *Show Boat*, failed to save Philip Barry's **WHITE WINGS**; personally signed affidavits by other producers resulted in a stay of execution for **GO-GETTERS** (originally **GOD LOVES US**); impressive italic testimonials from well-known people keep **THE LADDER** going. Variety reports that one critic (Percy Hammond, I think) guessed right nine times out of nine in predictions on the success of current shows. It apologizes for the frailty of its own oracle.

Two entirely entertaining plays (without prejudice to those I haven't yet seen) are current on Broadway. Molnar's **THE PLAY'S THE THING** has a few draggy spots, one of which is aggravated in the production, and a few vulgarities; but with the light touch of P. G. Wodehouse added to the deftness of the old Hungarian, it is a great satisfaction. You are half persuaded, when Molnar breaks into the opening scene, and lets his characters come forward and explain themselves to the audience, that the craftsman has sickened slightly of his trade. But when the time comes to drop the curtain on act two and the dramatist suggests to two other characters that they bring the curtain down, and then as the curtain begins to descend, waves it back critically until he produces his own perfect climax, you realize that the craftsman is not at all ashamed; he is revelling in his own mastery of a complicated instrument. He is playing a bit of vaudeville in the middle of the drama.

It concerns an amorous scene between an actress and a former lover, overheard by the lady's *fiancé* and his two dramatist friends. (The awkwardness of production to which I alluded is in making this lengthy off-stage scene penetrate a brick or other non-conducting wall, so that the strain on the listener is too great.) One of the dramatists, to save the boy's illusion, writes an absurd playlet in which the impassioned words occur, and forces the wanton lovers to rehearse it before the lad. This plot for a vaudeville one-acter is elaborated into a play about dramatists, flippant and a little cynical and with a bare sufficiency of serious ideas. In the hands

of Pirandello we should have been tortured. Being amused by Molnar is much easier and I fancy equally good for us. The players are excellent.

BROADWAY is a melodrama with brightly worked in comedy, for the most part as slick a play as the street it is named for has seen since *SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE*. If it needed to be boosted, the producers could always claim that they were throwing in a good cabaret with their melodrama, for the setting, in the professionals' anteroom of a cabaret, gives us half a dozen girls in various attires, a hoofer, and the highly advertised atmosphere of behind the scenes. The melodrama itself is concerned with bootleggers and hijackers, and an unsavoury crew they turn out to be. There is a very slick murder in act one, and from that time on there is, beneath the comedy and the rather feeble love interest, a sinister undertone which is remarkably well sustained. The ancient figures of hokum reappear so freshly dressed in the authentic tones and cadences and accents of Longacre Square that they please like old acquaintances suddenly grown prosperous and entertaining; the language and the gestures are so accurately reproduced that as you pass into the lobby during the intermission you are hardly aware of any change, the paint on BROADWAY is so fresh.

Mr Jed Harris last year presented an entertaining and slightly bawdy show called *WEAK SISTERS*; George Jean Nathan and I, one gathered from the advertisements, liked it. It failed. This year he has BROADWAY, as a reward for having been a good boy all last season. I congratulate him on it.

WHITE WINGS was a better piece of construction than Philip Barry's two preceding shows; its action developed naturally, without the forcing which he made so obvious before. It had a good theme, above it there was a good plot; and the medium (Mr Malevinsky's "crucible") was attractive. A failure with these elements is interesting.

The theme was the conflict between love and duty, figured by the oddest transpositions imaginable of Romeo (into the last of the white wings, lover of the horses which supply the white wings' *raison d'être*) and Juliet (into the first of the motorists, the daughter of the inventor of the motor car). Instantly Mr Barry gave

himself the subsidiary theme, always good, of the conflict between the generation of tradition and the generation of progress. By the choice of his protagonist he was bound to the fantastic; the figure always mentioned in old socialistic arguments may command an indulgent smile, but if you were not going to write a desperate study of dreariness, you had to make him the sort of person who could say, "I don't like to sit down while a horse is standing up," and your play would logically have a horse which, upon hearing these words, obligingly sat down.

A fantasy therefore on an old theme. And somewhere in the composition, Mr Barry's imagination flagged and he became diverted into verbal whimsicalities, puns, epigrams, jokes. He was trying the difficult job of keeping his fantasy running over a specific bed of reality, and never fused the two, so that in the end neither survived, and you remembered the same sort of cumbersome conversation that broke down *IN A GARDEN*. The effort to put a heavier charge of emotion into a framework like that of *BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK* resulted in the frame being broken, in the emotion being dissipated. There were, however, three attractive scenes: the love-making of the beginning, in which Mr Powers and Miss Lenihan were utterly charming, the Ziegfeld Follies dirty story told by the horse, and the supposed death of Major Inch which had a superb funny twist.

Mr Alexander Woollcott called *THE LADDER*, "or, Antoinette Perry [the leading woman] Through the Ages" which has the deadliness of wit and accuracy. It is a play which has as theme the idea that what we do now results, in some way, from our activities in previous incarnations. What we do now, regrettably, was a dull prologue; and the events which skipped through the centuries were each a bit of costume melodrama. The play seemed to me entirely without significance and the acting almost uniformly bad. The principals alone avoided the monotony of badness by being a little worse.

I have seen two plays of the repertory season created by Miss Eva Le Gallienne in Fourteenth Street and consider both of them so highly that I wish they were not involved in a project to which one naturally tosses the bones of "meritorious" and "commend-

able." *THE MASTER BUILDER* was done as it was done last year; Miss Le Gallienne herself appears to less advantage than she did in *THE CALL OF LIFE* and in *THREE SISTERS*. The quondam presser of Duse's flowers appears in an exaggerated make-up, and manages to lack the sense of life, of springiness and youth, which are needed to shake Solness and to send him to his height. In spite of that, the production has life, the play develops its momentum, and if a great deal of it had been omitted by Ibsen, it would have been tremendously effective.

THREE SISTERS is, so far, Miss Le Gallienne's triumph as an actress and as a director. Instead of the stout rope which Ibsen hands you two minutes after the curtain is up, by which he pulls you with varying power, through to the end, Chekhov tentatively, almost apologetically, lets a coloured thread drop before your eyes, considers it, sets it aside to find another in another corner of the room, matches the two, wonders if there is possibly a third, begins to braid a few threads together, and then, as if frightened by the obligation of starting, as if it bound him to knit a stocking he didn't want, lets them all fall, and comes back to them after he has looked at every other thread of life. Nothing is sewn; nothing is pulled together. And the great, significant, enormously interesting problem for the director is to let these threads lie as casually as Chekhov did, and yet to keep interest burning all the time. Miss Le Gallienne did it; it is hardly a subtraction from her triumph to say that she did it as the Moscow Art Theatre did, if that happens to be true, for that would only mean that she did it as Chekhov needs to be done. There are intense passions in the play; Heaven knows, for all the apparent listlessness, a great deal happens, including a fire and a duel. But what happens chiefly is that men and women love and are separated, dream and are cast into despair, desire and are disappointed or frustrated. Miss Le Gallienne found the tone for the gentleness and eagerness of the other sisters better than for herself; her early scenes were too much the bored princess of *THE SWAN*. In the second and final acts she was supremely right, presenting to us a terrible equilibrium of many passions. She vibrated and the play took its vibration from her.

I am not deeply impressed by the plays chosen for the first months of the repertory; they were, in all probability, dictated by other reasons than sheer artistic necessity. But I wish the Civic

Repertory Theatre a great success. I think it will easily avoid the stale feeling one always had in stock companies; Miss Le Gallenne's courage and intelligence will save it from worse pitfalls.

I have elsewhere expressed some reservations about Mr Ames's *IOLANTHE*, produced last year and still miraculously running. I am familiar with nine out of ten verses in the score; and distinguished fewer English words than I heard the first time I saw the lovely piece, when De Wolf Hopper put it on. This was especially true in the first act. In the second I heard, for the first time, a chorus correctly pronounce the name of Ovid (a highbrow chorus of a few years ago insisted on "invidious Naso") and there wasn't such a rush to have the songs over with. Some of the little girls were too arch, and Mr Lawford wasn't nearly as funny playing the Lord Chancellor as he was playing Polonius in flannels. The peers were superb and the stage management of "Go away, Madam" was sheer delight. For the forthcoming *Pirates* I predict a success; I am grateful in advance to Mr Ames for producing it. I only hope he will remember that it consists of WORDS, damned fine words, and MUSIC, very good music, too.

GILBERT SELDES

MODERN ART

IT seems like dipping into politics to mention that the committee for the French pictures at the Carnegie Institute International Exhibition was composed of the following: Franz Jourdain, Jean Pierre Laurens, Ernest Laurent, Henri Eugène Le Sidaner, Jean Marchand, Jacqueline Marval, Charles Masson, Emile René Ménard, and Paul Signac; and that the general European representative was Guillaume Lerolle; and that the work of this committee was pathetically inadequate and did a grievous injury to the reputation of France.

There is no intention, however, of dipping further into politics than to just merely mention the names. When France realizes, as it must, sooner or later, that at Pittsburgh, where these exhibitions are held, there is usually more to be learned from the English and German sections than from the French, it may decide to make a discreet enquiry into the matter, and the gentlemen and lady listed above may be able to throw light upon the situation. Or perhaps not. Committees are curious things. Committees are usually honest I believe. They mean well but their submerged natures are too much for them. The submerged nature of a committee is a thing that not even a Freud has as yet dared look into. Yet the English have on several occasions within memory of man, and in spite of their committees, managed to put their most artistic foot forward. This was undoubtedly the case in what was called "war work." In spite of the frenzied political atmosphere of the times the best men were chosen. That is all that is necessary—to choose the significant men. Why is it that the English can do this, and the Germans, and not the French? Is a "live wire" art committee an anomaly in Paris? Then away with committees. Committees are not the essential. The essential is pertinent work. Frankly, we Americans want the news from Paris, and in Pittsburgh we do not get it. A nation that makes a great statesman out of an ex-art critic, such as Clémenceau, and entrusts its present Ministry of Finance to an acknowledged connoisseur, such as Poincaré, ought to see the point. One word from the minister of finance to the *Sous-Secrétaire des Beaux-Arts* might work a change. (I can

imagine a Frenchman laughing at this and saying, "But you don't know our *Sous-Secrétaire des Beaux-Arts*." It is true I do not. But not knowing him I suppose him of the best.)

The annoying thing about this French collection is that it appears better on paper than in reality. At a time when Matisse, Picasso, Derain, and Braque were objects of keen intellectual curiosity throughout the world they were strictly taboo at Pittsburgh. Now that they command impressive prices for their work and figure in the public auctions they are at last admitted—in a fashion. I say "in a fashion," for who could gauge the gloomy spirit of Derain, which has won so much appreciation in gloomy England, from the two or three meagre little fish in the still-life that is supposed to represent this much-discussed talent? Or who suspect the gorgeous entertainment possible to a Matisse from the drab example here displayed? Or the power of Pablo Picasso from the innocuous madonna that comes to Pittsburgh via the Quinn Collection? Like most painters that have ever lived, Pablo Picasso has occasionally swung a lazy brush, yet he is not the sort of a man, unless I much mis-read him, whose idea in exhibiting abroad is to escape notice. He does, though, this time, and so do Matisse and Derain. All of which is absurd, and quite as worthy of the attention of M Poincaré as the decline of the franc.

The only thing in the French section that interested worthy Pittsburgh at all upon the occasion of my visit was the largish canvas by Dunoyer de Segonzac which the citizens chose, however, to regard as a puzzle rather than as an aesthetic treat. It was a composition of bathers with arms and legs flying about all over the place. Pittsburgh thought it could positively decide which legs belonged to which bodies and the audible pronouncements of the bystanders gave innocent pleasure to a considerable concourse. No other French picture had a comparable success.

The German collection was very small but it contained the most successful portrait in the entire cosmopolitan array, that of Mr D. by Conrad Hommel; the finest landscape in the exhibition, the Landing Stage on the Havel by Ulrich Hübner; and the wittiest, in fact the only witty picture among those present, D'Andrade as Don Juan by Max Slevogt. The Hübner and Slevogt paintings hung next on the line to Otto Dill's spirited Racing Horses and Max Liebermann's Portrait of a Lady. These four works of art

made the high point of this year's International and are a credit to the discernment of the committee that allowed them to pass. Upon looking again at my catalogue I see that there wasn't any German committee. Oh, oh, oh! Again I respectfully pray M Poincaré to look into this matter of committees.

There is not, I hasten to add, a hint of modernity in these German successes. One could suppose them to have been painted in remote recesses entirely shielded from the winds that blow from Montmartre or Montparnasse. I cannot say that I think it deeply matters. The only thing I ask of painters is to be alive and I do not even enquire how it happens that a man like Mr Hommel can put such zest in his style that you imagine he imagines he is inventing the academic formula. The whole business of portraiture, however, is in a most dubious state, and there are times when it appears to be going out altogether. Augustus John, the Englishman, who occasionally snatches us from the depths of despondency, is not of much help this year. He has been painting friends, it seems, and when he paints friends he lets himself down easily. He won't bother to paint hands and attach arms properly to shoulders and all that, except for money. Just the same he gets a suggestion of the special tan on young Mr Walpole's face that makes all the artists say, "Very clever indeed" and gives to Mr Roy Campbell, who is a poet, the genuine poet look. Mr John can be England's best or worst but he is neither the one nor the other this year in Pittsburgh.

HENRY McBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

IT is a fortune to have the flight through a musical season launched at a recital of Richard Buhlig's. There, interpretations raise a platform close to the ethereal bourne of music, affording a matchless view of the blue and white expanse. Gases of analytic and mechanistic obsessions, smoke of personal projections, are banked well below: no interpreter possesses a perspective of the transcendental matrix clearer and loftier than this pianist's. His play is richly selfless contact with fundamental vibrations, and purest articulation of them. He will assure you "Sonority is a mere accident, a medium and not the music"; and from his keyboard there progress just, perfectly sensuous definitions of the great forms and pellucid, exquisitely proportioned tones, refreshing as water and breath of hill-winds and sweep of a clean sky. You may miss at first the opulent, satiny, and high-coloured touch of other performers, notably of certain Russian-Jewish pianists. Shortly you will be content without it. The gush of the limpid source of art carries you beyond the wish that moments linger and eternalize themselves, to where the linked, related, proportional movement of finely appreciated volumes holds the sovereign good.

Its station-post was found the evening of October twentieth in a special balance of romanticists and classicists reverendly, passionately left to their own geniuses. The combination of the c-minor impromptu of Schubert, Beethoven's sonata Op. 110, Bach's c-minor partita, five of the preludes Op. 74, and the two *études* Op. 65 by Scriabine, and at the last one of the Nenias and the Roumanian Dance by Bartók, singing in their diverse tones, embodied extraordinarily fully the feeling of to-day. The I was lyrical still, but it sang with the modesty of the less exhibitionistic romanticists: with the warmth of Schubert, almost selfless in the pressive utter giving of his heart; with the subtlety of the last Beethoven so mystically close to the breath of things that his aggressive ego has become almost cosmical; with the coolness of the later Scriabine, far from the grand and solitary Chopinesque figure, feeling most keenly elusive sorrows greater than his own, and the shimmering hallucinations of delight objective as a rainbow or a wing. The places of vantage were occupied by the more stone-like expressions: the

partita's definition of a well-nigh impersonal Being, and intimate communication of an almost mechanistically conceived universe through a rhythmic station; the "objective" position of the dark-toned, earthy dirge and peasant-riot of Bartók. The movement of the centrally placed suite of Bach's indeed achieved the living pitch of the extra-personal and fresco-like, and projected one into a region of self-surrender where it was difficult and wonderful to breathe. And while the experiments of the Magyar included a romantic colouration and a rhythmic irregularity and unpredictability far from the feeling of the cantor's time, they too, in all their tentativeness, satisfied through an absoluteness and statue-like externality.

Richard Buhlig is himself the artist, orientated by the deepest heart of the hour. Art for us in our autistic chaos is a record and communication of pure transferences and objectifications, amorous unions of the whole personality with the fluid unbounded sources, impulsions

*"Sich einem Höhern, Reinern, Unbekannten
Aus Dankbarkeit freiwillig hinzugeben
Enträthselnd sich den ewig Ungeannten,"*

such as the pianist reverendly set before us. How fully he had done so, the experience of the next weeks was to demonstrate. One reviewer, at least, had not ever felt himself so assured of ultimate values, so conscious of what it was contemporary music lacked during perfect awareness of its manifold beauties, as in the month following this religious ceremony. It is true that none of the three noteworthy novelties and semi-novelties presented during the period were strictly contemporaneous products, and capable of bearing witness to an unusual alertness on the part of the critic. Alban Berg's string-quartet Op. 3 is of 1910. Bartók's first quartet is of 1908, and Bloch's Israel was written about 1912. Still, each of the three compositions stands with its author's most inclusive work, giving vivid form to the impulses which have set him solidly upon the musical front and made him problematical. The Berg quartet, for instance, recommends itself as the composition of one of Schoenberg's pupils with a personal song to sing, an individual experience to impart. As the extraordinary Pro Arte Quartet performed it the evening of the first concert of the League of Composers, a young

unifying force was perfectly evident in the web of this uncompromisingly atonal piece. Its subtle, daring, well-nigh fabulous string-timbres, cello *glissandi*, whistling harmonics, sparks *sul ponticello*, and other earmarks of the Viennese group, are structural; and the sensuous, refined, and fluent expression, romantic and yet dry, concentrated and reserved, both convinces the hearer and reveals elements of the exquisite impressionistic tradition in motion toward the focal-point of the future. It was equally evident, during the concert, that Berg's gift in this work as perhaps in *Wozzek*, is not clear of inhibitions. He appeared somewhat of a *précieux*, his manner more "cultivated" and kid-gloved than that which music is about quite warrants. That deep-blue night-sky, bestarred and *Tristanesque*, which he seemed to have felt above him as he wrote, was largely the interior of his master's shell. The frequent canons and imitations of the four instruments point to the terrible little sciolist; the initial theme announced by the second violin derives directly from the d-minor quartet of Schoenberg. A hearer of this semi-deafened time.

A record of experience certainly more meaty and robust, a proof of direction certainly more intense, was presented in the Pro Arte's performance of the Hungarian quartet. The mature Bartók's positiveness of attack, his capacity for powerful foursquare expression, in this early work assumes the form of a profound and anguished lyricism at first related to the "solitude" of *Tristan* Act Three, later more characteristically harsh and brusque. The popular and savage rhythms of the rounder Bartók, his broad plateaus and summits of sustained expression, already show their magnificent heads. Profoundly directed toward music, Bartók always has line, in this quartet an often long and ardent one. Yet the personality for all its force and honesty, is uncertain. Clearer feeling could not have countenanced some of the themes, occasionally as undistinguished in this quartet as in the not always more admirable second. Self-consciousness veritably weighs on the music in spots, evident in the embarrassment with which the voices of the first movement are conducted, and in the arbitrary and D'Indy-like recapitulation of themes in the final stretto. Again a hearer of the time.

Complaining of a lack in Israel comes dangerously close to being an act of ingratitude, so much has Bloch deserved of us with his glowing fragment of symphony. His richest, most puissant pages occur in it. If the work is not actually Bloch's greatest, it is not

excelled by Schelomo, the violin sonata, or the piano quintet, the most complete of his many deeply affecting compositions; and stands well to the fore in the ranks of post-Wagnerian music. It would be difficult to find in modern orchestral literature a work more compellingly filled with the feeling of bound and suffering strength, and Samson the Agonist in all its parts. The tragedy of a race at war with its own power and unable to find release; the dialectic of Jewish stubbornness, *hauteur*, and solemnity and Jewish weakness, sombreness, and despondency, is given form in an idiosyncratic, massive, and hieratically coloured music. Excepting the few Parsifal-like moments in the slow introduction "the tent of prayer in the wilderness," the fragment achieves almost perfectly the idiom for which Bloch commenced searching in the *Trois Poèmes Juifs*, and swells with strange Semitic trumpet-calls, stuttering brass, violent aggressive rhythms, and pastoral and still orientally melancholy lyric themes. None the less, we cannot banish from our delight the consciousness that this almost divine music lacks the great logic. These seried expressions of a rich deep fecund nature, of the richest, deepest, most fecund nature to be found among living composers, are not unhesitatingly, uncompromisingly expelled as music by Bach and Beethoven and Wagner is. It is plain why Bloch never achieved the whole of the projected symphony. Feeling was not quite absolute and irresistible: the second part with its pleading human tones, movingly lyrical, has not the life and *élan* of the first. The impulse is almost vanished before it concludes in space. That whole love, source of all great logics and great lines, so beautifully set before us at the piano recital; that vision leaving the artist dumb before unspeakable highnesses, had failed not only in Berg and Bartók, but here as well, as it had failed and still fails in so much new art, so much poor modern life.

But the interpreter who, even though he himself cannot create it, can make us aware of what it is we yearn for, comes with an impulse to liberty. With Schiller, we still feel that when the servants are so very busy, the Queen herself must be coming to visit.

PAUL ROSENFELD

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE Editors of THE DIAL have had pleasure in proffering to William Carlos Williams, THE DIAL's award for 1926.

May we repeat ourselves: "Our insistence that THE DIAL's award is not a prize is frequently taken to be a characteristic pedantry on our part, almost as reprehensible as the use of the preferred spelling in our pages. We can only reply that the dictionary and good usage are the pedants, not ourselves; we are using words in their accurate and accepted sense when we say that a prize is something contested for and that an award is something given. . . . THE DIAL's award 'crowns' no book, nor does it imply any moral or even aesthetic judgement of superiority. It indicates only that the recipient has done a service to letters and that, since money is required even by those who serve letters, since the payment in money is generally so inadequate when good work is concerned, THE DIAL is in a way adding to the earnings of a writer, diminishing, by a little, the discrepancy between his minimum requirements as a citizen in a commercial society and his earnings as an artist. We have never believed that the recipient has, or will have, done exactly two thousand dollars' worth of service to letters. We haven't the standard of measurement for such delicacy of judgement."

William Carlos Williams is a physician, a resident of New Jersey, the author of prose and verse. He has written of "fences and outhouses built of barrel-staves and parts of boxes," of the "sparkling lady" who "passes quickly to the seclusion of her carriage," of Weehawken, of "The Passaic, that filthy river," of "hawsers that drop and groan," of "a young horse with a green bed-quilt on his withers." His "venomous accuracy," if we may use the words used by him in speaking of the author of *The Raven*, is opposed to "makeshifts, self-deceptions and grotesque excuses." Among his meditations are *Chickory* and *Daisies*, *Queen-Ann's-Lace*, trees—hairy, bent, erect—orchids, and magnolias. We need not, as Wallace Stevens has said, "try to . . . evolve a mainland from his leaves, scents and floating bottles and boxes." "What Columbus discovered is nothing to what Williams is looking for."

He writes of lions with Ashur-ban-i-pal's "shafts bristling in their necks," of "the bare backyard of the old negro with white hair," of "branches that have lain in a fog which now a wind is blowing away." "This modest quality of realness which he attributes to 'contact' with the good Jersey dirt sometimes reminds one of Chekhov," says a connoisseur of our poetry. "Like Chekhov he knows animals and babies as well as trees. And to people who are looking for the story his poems must often seem as disconnected and centrifugal as Chekhov's later plays." We concur that "his phrases have a simplicity, a solid justice." He "is forthright, a hard, straight, bitter javelin," said William Marion Reedy. "As you read him you catch in your nostrils the pungent beauty in the wake of his 'hard stuff,' and you begin to realize how little poetry—or prose—depends on definitions, or precedents, or forms." You do.

A child is a "portent"; a poet is a portent. As has been said of certain theological architecture, it is the peculiarity—we have noticed—of certain poetic architecture that "the foundations are ingeniously supported by the superstructure." The child

"Sleeps fast till his might
Shall be piled
Sinew on sinew."

In the arboreally imaginative world of thought as in the material world,

"creeping energy, concentrated
counterforce—welds sky, buds, trees."

We have said that Carlos Williams is a doctor. Physicians are not so often poets as poets are physicians, but may we not assert confidently that oppositions of science are not oppositions to poetry but oppositions to falseness. The author of the *Religio Medici* could not be called anything more than he could be called a poet. "He has many verba ardentia," as Samuel Johnson has observed—"forcible expressions, which he would never have found, but by venturing to the utmost verge of propriety; and flights which would never have been reached, but by one who had very little fear of the shame of falling."

The service which it is our pleasure to acknowledge is "practical

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service. Service not to that Juggernaut, the Reading Public,—that Juggernaut which is well served in being served badly. Service rather to the Imaginative Individual, to him who is in our world always the Marooned Individual."

In one of Doctor Williams' books we find a poem entitled, "To Wish Courage to Myself." It is to wish courage to him and in the inviting of his hardy spirit, to wish it to ourselves, that we have— inadequately—spoken.

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